- **METRO / A24**

Dennis Roldan ordered killing of kidnapped boy, says suspect-turned-state witness

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Napocor granted power rate hike

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Inside the Inquirer: Something notable about Special Sections

- **SPORTS / A25**

Blow-by-blow account: Fans get closer to the action

'Hard labor' means no cell phones, no VIP treatment

WOOOW, KAWAWA NAMAN!

By Luige A. del Puerto

DISGRACED FORMER Armed Forces Comptroller Carlos Garcia is not doing any hard labor but his keepers at Camp Crame say he isn't

'HARD LABOR'/ A20

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Wednesday, December 7, 2005 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 362 P18
website: www.inq7.net

Defensor confirms report: No more logging in Samar

By Norman Bordadora

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY MICHAEL DEfensor yesterday confirmed reports attributed to the bishops of Samar that he had given them his personal commitment that San Jose Timber Corp. (SJTC) would not be allowed to resume logging operations on the island.

DEFENSOR/ A21

Threat closes US Embassy

Americans receive unspecified terror info

By Volt Contreras

THE US EMBASSY IN Manila closed down and suspended all its public services yesterday after receiving what it called "a plausible threat information."

On the heels of the embassy move, the Philippine National Police late last night placed its entire force in Metro Manila under full alert, ordering stepped up patrols by mobile, motorcycle and SWAT units.

Asked if the alert was connected to the threat against the US Embassy, National Capital police commander, Director Vidal Querol told the INQUIRER, "Yes."

A statement issued by the embassy before noon yesterday initially said visa, consular, social security and veterans affairs services would be resumed "when deemed appropriate."

But when reached at around 4:30 p.m., US Press Attaché Matthew Lussenhop said the embassy would remain closed to the public today.

Lussenhop declined to give details of the threat. But the embassy statement reminded American citizens to remain vigilant amid "the continued potential for terrorist attacks" against them or against United States and other Western interests in the country.

It was the longest work disruption in the embassy in recent memory, and occurred five days after the US government froze assets that three leaders of the extremist Abu Sayyaf might have under American jurisdiction.

THREAT / A6

Embassy of the United States of America
DEFENDER

ERIK ARAZAS

"PLAUSIBLE THREAT INFORMATION" shuts down US Embassy on Tuesday suspending visa, passport and all other public transactions. Red alert is up, and security tight along the perimeter of the embassy compound on Roxas Boulevard in Ermita, Manila. The embassy remains closed today.

US intel czar in surprise visit to RP

By Volt Contreras and Nikko Dizon

US TOP SPOOK JOHN NEGROponte arrived unannounced yesterday afternoon at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

US Press Attaché Matthew Lussenhop sounded surprised to receive a call from the INQUIRER concerning the arrival of the US director for national intelligence. But he confirmed Negroponte's presence here, although he provided scant details on the latter's mission.

Negroponte was appointed to his present post after the reelection of President George W. Bush last year who put him on top of all the US intelligence agencies, including the controversial Central Intelligence Agency.

According to Lussenhop, the visit has "nothing to do with the threat" that the US Embassy said it received Monday night and which forced the two-day suspension of its consular and other public services. *(See story on this page.)*

Lussenhop said Negroponte, who was Washington's ambassador to Manila in 1993-96,

US INTEL/ A7

Garci told talking to GMA is the main issue

By Michael Lim Ubac, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Philip C. Tubeza

WILL VIRGILIO GARCILLANO name his "persistent lady caller," Sen. Rodolfo Biazon asked yesterday on the eve of the former election commissioner's much-awaited appearance before a joint House investigative panel.

But Biazon also said that the wiretapped phone conversations purportedly between Garcillano and President Macapagal-Arroyo were more important than the ones several dozen politicians reportedly made to Garcillano during last year's elections and which Garcillano threatened to expose.

The question Biazon asked was foremost in the minds of lawmakers interviewed yesterday by the INQUIRER as Garcillano prepared to appear today before a joint hearing of five House committees

GARCI/ A8

'Hello Garci' tapes, according to Garci

By Michael Lim Ubac

(EDITOR'S NOTE: THE FOLLOWING are specific instances caught on tape which point to alleged fraud in the 2004 elections. Virgilio Garcillano has provided some answers in several recent interviews with the INQUIRER. His answers also addressed other charges by the opposition)

"So will I still lead by more than 1 M overall?" said a female voice which sounds like President Macapagal-Arroyo. Garcillano supposedly replied: "Pipilitin ho natin yan, pero (We will do our best, but)

HELLO/ A8

JESS YUSON

MAJ. GEN. Jovito Palparan hangs his head as his promotion is bypassed by the Commission on Appointments. Beside him, all reappointed were, from left, AFP Chief of Staff Lt.Gen. Senga, Lt.Gen. Teodosio and Lt. Gen. Bagasin

INSIDE THE INQUIRER

Carabao creator remains giddy kid at heart

By Alya B. Honasan
Editor, Sunday Inquirer Magazine

WHEN JESS ABRERA WAS A BOY, HE OFTEN went home for the summer to his grandfather's farm in Busuanga, northern Palawan.

On one such trip, when he was in the sixth grade, the grandfather gave Abrera his very own carabao, which he named San Rafael.

Abrera would often ride San Rafael, wash him, and watch as he worked in the fields. He developed a healthy respect for the beast of burden: "I thought, what a humble animal. He works so hard, so quietly. And to think that

CARABAO/ A22

HAPPY 20th Anniversary sa PDI!
AT DA ALIPIN!

Enchanted evening: Tycoons watch 20 Guyitos unveiled

Zobel de Ayala/Ayala
Pangilinan/PLDT
Artelicio/Canon
Manning/HSBC
Gokongwei-Pe/Robinsons
Abacan/ Metrobank
T. Sy/SM
Montinola/BPI
Genio/Globe
Dr. Breuer/BMW
P. Basin/Nokia
Tantoco/Rustan's
Sy Marie France
Bacarro/Pfizer
Advincula/Digitel
Co/Ford Motors
Elero /Philip Morris
Nandkishore/Nestlé
Dentsu Advertising for Toyota
A. Limbacco for Samsung

RAFFY LERMA

MINI-SCULPTURES of PDI mascot painted by leading artists are thank-you gifts to top 20 advertisers (above, right) during the "Unveiling" of the life-sized carabaos at the Ayala Museum on Monday.

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IF SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED AT THE Ayala Museum on the evening of Dec. 5, the country's private sector would have gone into a tailspin.

For on that balmy evening, captains of industry took time out of their tight schedules to witness the unveiling of the 20 Guyitos painted by the Philippines' top artists as part of the INQUIRER's 20th anniversary celebration.

ENCHANTED/ A10

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent rains which may trigger flashfloods and landslides over the Bicol region including Quezon province. The rest of Luzon will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY JAMIE ALARCON, PDI RESEARCH/11/07/05 SOURCE PAGASA

Second FRONT PAGE

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Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Napocor granted power rate hike

By Abigail L. Ho

THE RATES OF STATE-OWNED POWER GENERator National Power Corp. (Napocor) will increase by as much as 12.23 centavos per kilowatt hour after Napocor obtained approval from state regulators to recover deferred generation, fuel and foreign exchange costs.

Napocor's rates for Luzon will increase by 12.23 centavos per kWh, for the Visayas by 8.31 centavos per kWh and for Mindanao by 6.58 centavos per kWh.

The Energy Regulation Commission (ERC) approved Napocor's two applications for approval of its fifth generation rate adjustment mechanism (Gram) and fourth incremental currency exchange rate adjustment (Icera), representing deferred accounting adjustments in its monthly billings to customers for the period October 2004 to March 2005.

The quarterly Gram allows Napocor to recover fluctuations in the cost of the power that it buys from its independent power producers.

The Icera is a quarterly rate adjustment mechanism that allows Napocor to reflect foreign exchange fluctuations in its billings.

Napocor president Cyril del Callar explained that the rates that the ERC approved were only half of what the state firm applied for in mid-September.

"This approval represents part of the amount that we otherwise have to fund from other sources such as loans had they not been allowed and approved by the ERC," he said in a statement.

While Napocor would still have to tap the financial markets to address its yearly requirements, he said 2005 had not been a heavy borrowing year for the state firm as it took out loans amounting to only $500 million.

The rest of its requirements were raised internally or through other means.

Napocor is allowed to borrow as much as $1.5 billion a year to meet its financial requirements.

Del Callar said the Gram and Icera represented cost recoveries related to fuel and foreign exchange and not extra charges to generate revenues.

"These are pass-through costs. Napocor does not earn a single centavo from these," he explained.

He said the Gram and Icera were computed on the basis of actual and historical incurred costs from October 2004 to March 2005.

Instead of trying to recover the Gram and Icera-deferred adjustments in full, Napocor has opted to stagger its recovery for periods ranging from 6 to 36 months, Del Callar said.

The most recent approved rate increase would enable Napocor to recover its fuel-related costs over 12 months in Luzon, six months in the Visayas and 18 months in Mindanao.

The Icera costs would be recovered over a maximum of three years, he said.

Selling kidneys is no escape from poverty

By Christian V. Esguerra

ONE OF THEM PUT UP A BILLIARD HALL. Another built a house. A third one paid off his debts.

Each of them sold a kidney, raising ethical questions over the relative ease with which some people – given the right amount – can sell a vital organ.

"Many of the poor are (still) ignorant of how to invest money or are saddled by poor values and bad habits," bioethics expert Dr. Angeles Tan Alora said in her lecture yesterday at the International Congress on Bioethics at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

Elsewhere in India, one organ vendor spent the money on *shabu* and women while another used the amount for his wedding. Still another simply wanted to feel how it was "to live with money," she reported.

"Business fails or money is squandered and there is no escape from poverty," said Alora, former executive director of the Southeast Asian Center for Bioethics.

The Vatican-sponsored conference tackled the ticklish issue of organ donation, which has spawned an informal market involving donors, recipients and middlemen.

"Organ transplantation is an increasingly successful and mainstream part of contemporary medicine," Bishop Anthony Fischer, auxiliary prelate of Sydney, said in a separate lecture.

"The problem is there are not enough organs to go around. What are we to do about that?"

Worldwide, 100 to 200 per one million people suffer from end stage renal disease, according to Alora. "Many (people) who need new organs die while waiting," she said.

In 2003, there were a total of 420 transplants, about 10 percent less than the needed operations, Alora said. Citing a study at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute, she said most of the kidneys (250) came from donors not related to the recipients. And most of them were paid in the process.

Transplant is one way of addressing the problem of a defective kidney. But an operation costs between P500,000 and P1 million. Medication costs between P360,000 and P600,000 a year while a kidney costs about P150,000, according to Alora.

The other recourse is dialysis, which costs from P2,000 to P3,000 per session. It's done thrice weekly, she said. More than 4,000 new patients go through dialysis yearly in the country.

The selling of kidneys is apparently rampant in Rizal Park, Bacood and Baseco compound in Manila; Novaliches, Quezon City; and Addition Hills in Mandaluyong, she said.

One community has at least 150 males with only one kidney, she said. A person is born with two kidneys.

It's take two for Mark Jimenez

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

IT'LL BE TAKE TWO FOR MARK Jimenez.

The former Manila congressman who served 14 months in a United States federal prison for tax fraud and making illegal campaign contributions will be deported to the Philippines on Dec. 13, sources privy to the new arrangements told the INQUIRER.

And if his homecoming comes off without a hitch, Jimenez won't be alone on his long flight from New York.

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. and Manila Rep. Joey Hizon will be around to pick him up at the gate of the Pennsylvania prison facility to escort him all the way back to Manila.

And he would land at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Dec. 15 like a VIP, with a "welcoming committee" of his other congressmen-friends to meet him.

Pichay told the INQUIRER he and Hizon were just waiting for US government approval of their request to have Jimenez placed in their "custody" upon his discharge from prison.

He said they just wanted to give the controversial man a "more dignified" homecoming after he was humbled by his surrender, conviction and imprisonment in 2003.

Jimenez, whose original name was Mario Crespo, owned a computer company in the US when he got into trouble for making illegal campaign contributions to President Bill Clinton and the Democratic Party.

He returned to the Philippines in 1998 and quickly befriended President Joseph Estrada who appointed him adviser on Latin American affairs and described him as a "corporate genius."

Fighting extradition

Indicted that same year in the US, Jimenez ran for Congress representing the sixth district of Manila and won, but then spent most of his time fighting extradition to the US.

Before he decided to surrender instead, Jimenez charged then Justice Secretary Hernando Perez with extorting $2 million from him in connection with the Impsa power project.

He said he also gave at least P8 million to a foundation belonging to President Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband, First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo.

As he did his time in a US prison, he was unseated in Congress for failing the residency requirement when he ran.

He was originally set to be freed on Nov. 21 and deported to the Philippines but his release was reportedly delayed after he reportedly gave going-away gifts to his guards and fellow inmates.

But Pichay denied the report. "That is just talk," he said.

Earlier, Hizon wrote Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo asking that the Department of Foreign Affairs make arrangements with the US government to have Jimenez turned over to him, Pichay and former Bulacan Rep. Wilfrido Villarama when he is released so they could accompany him home.

"I'm not sure if the US government will give us custody of Mark but as soon as the arrangements are made, we will go. I am a true friend; I accompanied him (to the US) and I will fetch him," Pichay said.

Hizon and Pichay plan to leave for the US on Dec. 11.

Villarama, however, was reported not to be joining the two.

On Nov. 21, when Jimenez was originally thought to be arriving in Manila, Villarama went up to Baguio City to attend a meeting.

It was Villarama, President Arroyo's chief of staff when she was Vice President, who exposed the alleged $2-million extortion by Perez.

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Christmas trees at Palace gates made from barbed wire

By Christine O. Avendaño

THERE IS STILL BARBED WIRE ON MENdiola but it now makes up the Christmas trees adorning the Malacañang gate there.

Members of the Presidential Security Group (PSG) made a ceremony of lighting up the barbed wire Christmas trees yesterday.

The barbed wire used to block the Palace's Mendiola gate to keep protesters out.

But last week it was taken down along with other barricades put up around the Malacañang complex as the PSG's way of welcoming the Christmas season and declaring "a new atmosphere of peace."

Political crisis was over

Palace officials had said the lifting of the barriers was an indication the worst of the political crisis that has been buffeting the Arroyo administration was over.

In a phone interview, PSG chief Col. Delfin Bangit said that instead of getting rid of it, his office decided to use the barbed wire to make the Christmas trees.

At Mendiola, five of the trees were put up, one of which stands 12 feet.

Bangit said students of La Consolacion College and College of the Holy Spirit, which are both near Malacañang, helped decorate the trees.

During their lighting, the PSG band played Christmas carols, attracting a crowd to Mendiola.

Bangit was overheard telling a nun that at least the Christmas trees would be the first thing protesters planning to march on Malacañang today would see.

Release of political prisoners

Relatives of political prisoners will be accompanied by members of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines to Malacañang at 10 a.m. today to press for a dialogue with the President.

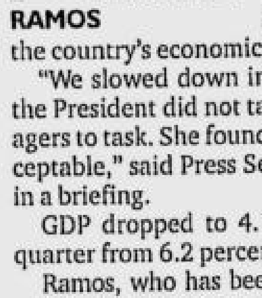
TFDP said it would press for a dialogue for the release of political prisoners "with or without the President's approval."

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye was caught unawares about the group's plan to march to Malacañang. He said the TFDP call was not on the President's schedule today which he described as hectic.

"The PSG lifted the barricades last week and there is a reason for that. But as to what will happen (today) we really do not know," Bunye said. *With Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Economy should spur Cha-cha – FVR

By Doris C. Dumlao


RAMOS

FORMER PRESIDENT FIDEL V. RAMOS YESterday said a faltering economy, not any political turbulence, should make it imperative to speed up efforts to amend the Constitution.

Ramos said the country's current economic performance was not enough to lift many Filipinos out of poverty.

"It is the economy that is in my view the tipping point—not so much the political part of it. We're seeing that the gap between the rich and poor in the Philippines is increasing," Ramos said at the sidelines of a forum of the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines.

"Even a 5 percent GDP (gross domestic product) growth for any year is not enough. If we are to raise the quality of life of every Filipino, that economy should grow by 6-8 percent every year for 10 to 15 years," Ramos said.

He added the recent appreciation of the peso to P54:$1 was not good enough, noting the peso traded at only 26 during his term and hit a low of only 40 during the Asian currency crisis.

"Why can't we go back to these levels? Our currency used to be at par with Taiwan ('s dollar) and the Thai baht," he said.

But the Palace is satisfied with the pace of the country's economic growth.

"We slowed down in the third quarter but the President did not take the economic managers to task. She found their explanations acceptable," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a briefing.

GDP dropped to 4.1 percent in the third quarter from 6.2 percent a year ago.

Ramos, who has been pushing for a parliamentary form of government and for GMA to cut her term short, said he was supportive of initiatives to push Charter change through a constituent assembly. *With Gil Cabacungan, Jr.*

NAVY CHIEF

It's Mayuga, and it's final

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

AFTER ABRUPTLY SCUTTLING his scheduled installation rites last Monday, Malacañang yesterday gave AFP Inspector General Vice Admiral Mateo Mayuga the green light to assume command of the Philippine Navy.

When reached by phone yesterday, Mayuga could not hide his relief at the official announcement issued by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

"I felt a little anxiety there," he said, chuckling, when asked if he had entertained doubts he would still be named the new Navy chief in the wake of Monday's snafu.

Mayuga was supposed to have taken over as Navy chief from Vice Admiral Ernesto de Leon last Monday in ceremonies that had been announced a week before. But at 9 a.m., De Leon suddenly postponed the turnover "indefinitely" after Bunye said the President had not yet appointed anyone in the place of De Leon, who has gone on terminal leave prior to retiring in March.

Following Bunye's announcement of Mayuga's appointment, a Navy spokesman said the turnover would be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday at the Navy headquarters on Roxas Blvd., Manila.

Confident

Asked if he was confident there will be no more last-minute snags, Mayuga chuckled some more and answered, "I've always been confident."

AFP chief Gen. Generoso Senga sought to downplay the controversy over Monday's aborted naval command turnover.

Appearing before the Commission on Appointments yesterday, Senga said the top brass simply decided to put off the turnover as De Leon's successor had not yet been officially named.

"We decided to postpone the turnover ceremonies for the position of flag officer in command indefinitely because as of yesterday we (had) not received a written approval of who will be the next flag officer in command," he said.

When reminded by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita himself had disclosed Mayuga's appointment as Navy chief last Sunday, Senga said: "As I mentioned earlier, we have not received a written approval and, therefore, we could not proceed with the turnover."

Mayuga was luckier than his classmate in the Philippine Military Academy Class '73, Lt. Gen. Samuel Bagasin, who faced a similar predicament last September.

Bagasin, who was then commander of the Army's 4th Infantry Division, was all set to take over as chief of the AFP Southern Command. But on the eve of the turnover, Malacañang aborted the rites and then announced that the new Southcom chief was AFP Deputy Chief of Staff Edilberto Adan.

Bagasin was later promoted and given the position vacated by Adan.

Timing

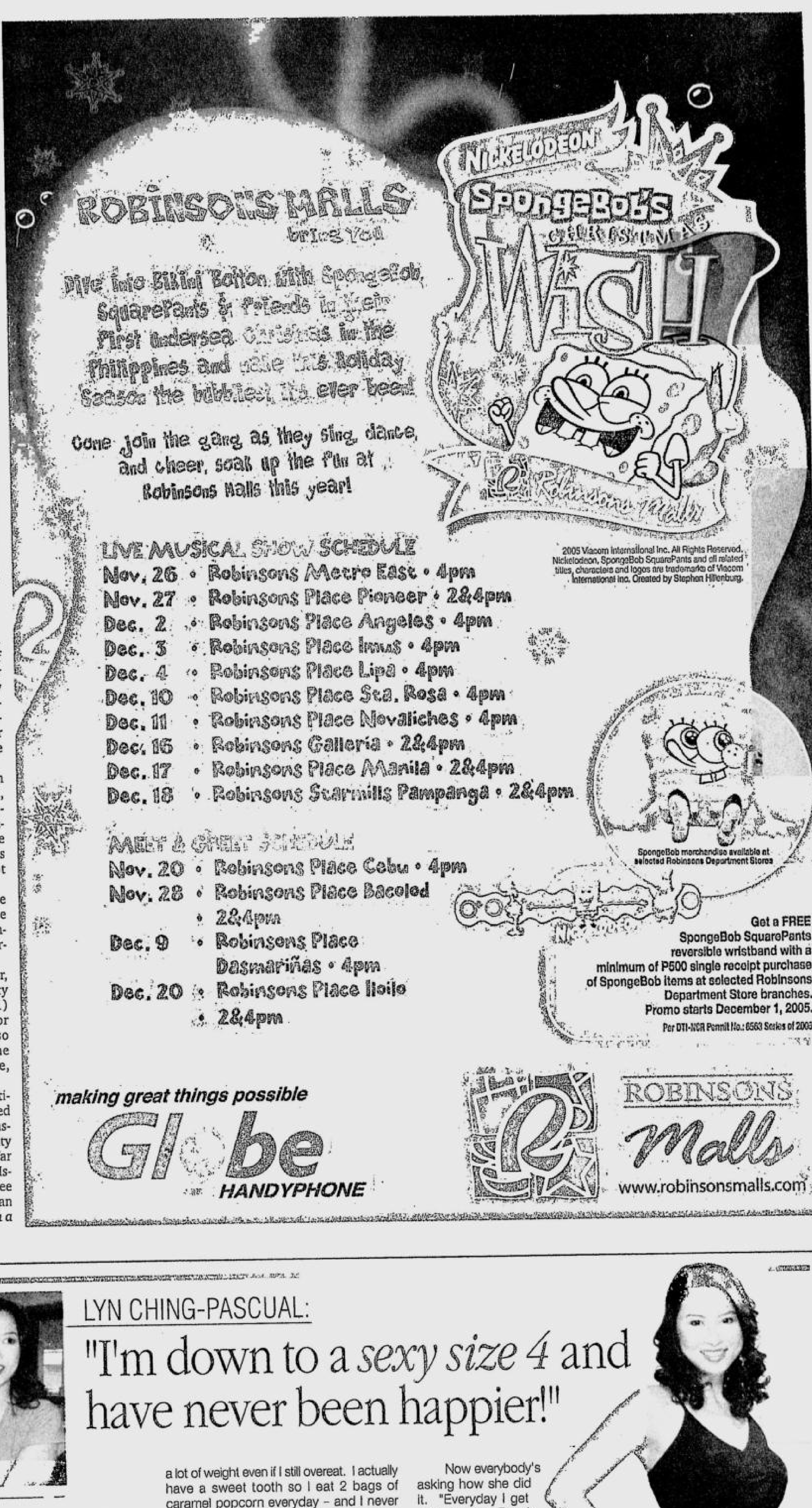
Timing is important for Mayuga. If not installed as Navy chief before Dec. 9, he would no longer qualify for the post as military rules provide that officers appointed to major service commands must have at least a year left in service. He is due to retire on Dec. 9, 2006.

De Leon reportedly went on terminal leave starting Dec. 5, three months ahead of his retirement on March 22, to accommodate Mayuga. Had De Leon vacated the office as scheduled, Mayuga would not qualify.

Mayuga said it was up to the Board of Generals to decide whether he would stay on concurrently as AFP Inspector General.

A decorated naval officer, Mayuga was the AFP deputy chief of staff for personnel (J-1) before he was named Inspector General last July 1. He had also served as the commander of the Naval Base Cavite in Ternate, Cavite.

Mayuga had trained on anti-submarine warfare in the United States. He also completed masteral studies in national security and policy at the US Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He holds a master's degree in management from the Asian Institute of Management. *With a report from TJ Burgonio*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Nov. 26 • Robinsons Metro East • 4pm
Nov. 27 • Robinsons Place Pioneer • 2&4pm
Dec. 2 • Robinsons Place Angeles • 4pm
Dec. 3 • Robinsons Place Imus • 4pm
Dec. 4 • Robinsons Place Lipa • 4pm
Dec. 10 • Robinsons Place Sta. Rosa • 4pm
Dec. 11 • Robinsons Place Novaliches • 4pm
Dec. 16 • Robinsons Galleria • 2&4pm
Dec. 17 • Robinsons Place Manila • 2&4pm
Dec. 18 • Robinsons Starmills Pampanga • 2&4pm

MEET & GREET SCHEDULE

Nov. 20 • Robinsons Place Cebu • 4pm
Nov. 28 • Robinsons Place Bacolod • 2&4pm
Dec. 9 • Robinsons Place Dasmariñas • 4pm
Dec. 20 • Robinsons Place Iloilo • 2&4pm

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DA can't show it got P728-M fertilizer funds

By TJ Burgonio

OVER A YEAR AFTER DISTRIBUTING P728-million to congressmen and other government officials for the purchase of fertilizer and other farm inputs, the Department of Agriculture can't show proof it had gotten the money from the Department of Budget and Management.

Appearing at the budget deliberations in the Senate, agriculture officials yesterday admitted they didn't have a copy of the DA letter asking the DBM to release the fertilizer fund.

The disclosure baffled senators, who had opened an inquiry into the alleged mismanagement of the multimillion-peso fund widely suspected to have ended up in the campaign coffers of the officials and President Macapagal-Arroyo in the runup to the May 2004 elections.

"This is a lot of mystery. Unthinkable events and circumstances are being presented to us and it's really something that puts one to wonder what has happened to this fund," Senate President Franklin Drilon later told reporters.

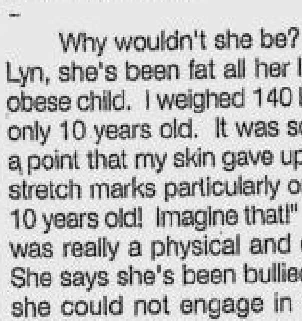
Under questioning by Drilon, Ofelia Agawin, DA director for financial and management service, admitted the agency had not seen a copy of the letter requesting the release of the fund from the DBM.

"We were trying to look for that a long time ago, but we haven't seen any," she told the Senate committee of the whole.

When Drilon pressed if the document was missing, she said: "We can't find it, sir."

Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban, who was also grilled on the fertilizer fund, assured the senators the department "would exhaust all possible means" to come up with a copy of the letter.

"When we get to the office we shall get the records from the budget. We don't have it now," he said.


LYN CHING-PASCUAL:

"I'm down to a *sexy size 4* and have never been happier!"

A year after childbirth and after only two months of regular treatments at Marie France, TV host Lyn Ching Pascual is at her slimmest, healthiest, one of the happiest periods of her life.

Why wouldn't she be? According to Lyn, she's been fat all her life. "I was an obese child. I weighed 140 lbs when I was only 10 years old. It was so bad it got to a point that my skin gave up on me. I had stretch marks particularly on the legs – at 10 years old! Imagine that!" For a kid, that was really a physical and emotional toll. She says she's been bullied, teased, and she could not engage in sports, which made it even harder for her to lose weight.

When she got older, Lyn went through different weight-loss methods. "Yo-yo dieting...gym (I'd workout religiously for months, then stop)...badminton (I'd play everyday, lose weight, and then stop)...it even got to a point when I became bulimic," confesses Lyn. "And I was on the verge of anorexia because I already refused to eat. I was at my thinnest then: 111 lbs. But I looked sick. I looked really, really sick: dry skin...I wasn't moving too much because I was always tired...I can't breathe well...I had a lot of problems at that time. Plus, I really love eating food! That's why it's so hard for me to go on a diet."

That's why she couldn't be happier when she enrolled at Marie France. "I lost a lot of weight even if I still overeat. I actually have a sweet tooth so I eat 2 bags of caramel popcorn everyday – and I never miss a day. I'm like, Marie France is making sure that I get thin anyway, so I really don't watch what I eat. So I'm really surprised with the result of my Marie France treatments. And I'm very happy because I can still eat whatever I want!"

She adds, "Their treatments are very easy, very fast, very safe, and very convenient for me. After the show *(Unang Hirit)*, which ends at around 8:30-8:45 a.m., I go straight to Marie France. They open early so there's really no problem regarding schedule. It's very convenient because whatever I wear when I arrive, I can also wear when I leave. I don't have to take a bath or even take some time to rest after a really, really heavy workout. There's no workout. It's really convenient for nursing mothers like me because I can immediately hold my baby when I get home (which is only about 10 minutes from the center) since I'm not tired. At Marie France, you just lie down and everyone else has to work for you. Where can you get that kind of deal? Literally, you just lie down and you lose weight. What more can I ask for!"

Indeed, Lyn is a picture of true satisfaction. With a figure that has transformed from, according to her, "a huge American size 10" to "a sexy size 4"...who wouldn't be? "Now I can wear sexy clothes!" she exclaims. "It feels good to know that you can really lose weight if you want to."

Now everybody's asking how she did it. "Everyday I get compliments. People from the audience, people from the show, even a close friend of mine says, 'I have never seen you this thin before.' That's because before, when I used to workout a lot, I lost weight but I looked bulky. I lost on pounds but not on inches. Now I lose both inches and pounds. And whenever people ask how I did it, I always tell them – Marie France! Don't do anything, just Marie France. Just lie down at Marie France!"

With her new, slimmer Marie France body, she's more active, feels healthier, and looks much younger even with a 1-year old daughter in tow. What makes her really happy, of course, are the compliments her husband showers her everyday. "He says, 'My wife is so sexy.' Next to 'I love you', that for me is the best thing I hear him say."

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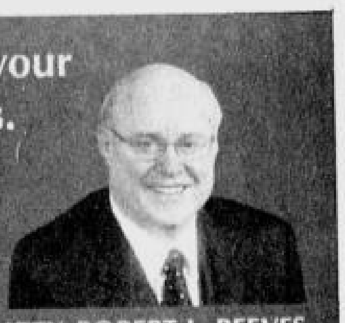

Rights group assails Singapore maids' plight

SINGAPORE—A HUMAN rights group urged Singapore yesterday to provide better legal protection for foreign maids, many of whom face "abysmally" long hours, "pitiful" wages and conditions amounting to "forced labor."

About 150,000 women—mainly from Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka—work as maids in Singapore, with roughly one in every seven households employing a live-in worker so that couples can work and raise families.

The 128-page report by New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) is based on 90 interviews and case studies and describes numerous instances of cruelty and abuse. It included comments based on interviews with Singapore government officials.

"A system that excludes a class of workers from labor protections, leaving them to work for 16 hours a day, seven days a week, for pitifully low wages is one that demands serious and meaningful reform," the report said.

By excluding maids from its Employment Act, Singapore's labor laws fail to comply with international law, it said.

"Singapore isn't the worst, but it's far from the best," said Kenneth Roth, executive director of HRW at a press conference.

Roth said Singapore was so much weaker than Hong Kong, where domestic workers are included in their main labor laws, protecting their rights to a weekly rest day, a minimum wage, maternity leave, public holidays, and paid annual leave.

Singapore's Ministry of Manpower said the report "grossly exaggerates the abuse and lack of rights" of maids in Singapore.

"On their own accord, (maids) choose to work in Singapore because of better conditions here compared to their home and other countries ... The majority of (maids) enjoy meaningful and safe employment in Singapore, " the ministry said. *Reuters, AP*

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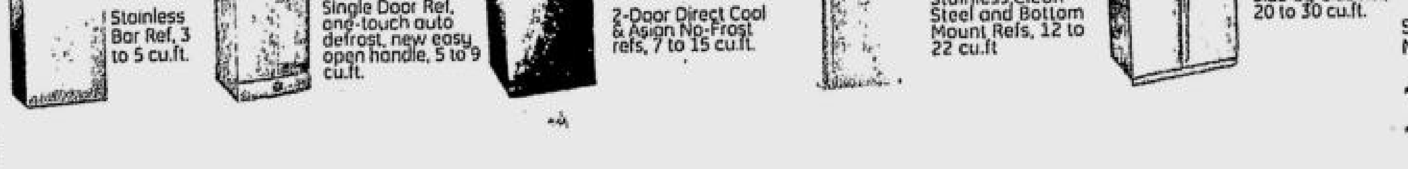

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**Source. Harris Poll, 2003

3 convicted of human trafficking

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE FIRST CONVICTION under the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 was handed down by Judge Jesus Carbon of the regional trial court here.

On Nov. 29, Hadja Jarma Lalli, Ronnie Aringoy and Nestor Relampagos were found guilty of recruiting Maricel (not her real name) to work in Malaysia and turning her into a prostitute.

The three were sentenced to life imprisonment and ordered to pay a fine of P2.5 million each and at least P100,000 in damages.

Relampagos is at large.

Based on court records, the three had recruited Maricel for employment as restaurant entertainer in Malaysia. Lalli and Relampagos themselves escorted the girl to Malaysia.

Instead of the promised work, however, Maricel was forced to work as a prostitute from June 14 to July 8, 2005.

She was able to escape with the help of her sister who was also working in Malaysia and the sister's Indonesian husband.

On her return to Zamboanga City, Maricel filed a complaint against the three recruiters with the help of the Public Attorney's Office.

Lalli and Aringoy were immediately arrested but Relampagos could not be found. *Rolly A. San Juan, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Family festival at Robinsons

THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY (TCL) WILL hold its 2nd Annual Family Festival on Dec. 10 at the Robinsons Galleria Fountain Area from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Activities for the Family Festival will include storytelling sessions, theater production and fun and games for the whole family. The event will be highlighted by the Grand Finals of the Interschool Quiz Bee Contest where students from various schools will engage in a battle of wits.

Children's books can also be bought at discounted prices at the book fair during the event. Part of the sales from the book fair will be donated to TCL's library enrichment program.

TCL, a project of the Gokongwei Brothers Foundation, is the first multimedia learning center for children, which offers free access. TCL aims to contribute to the transformation of the growing child into a socially responsible person by imparting good values, enhancing the child's natural creativity and by stimulating the child's thirst for knowledge.

The Children's Library centers are located at Robinsons Place in Novaliches and Robinsons Place in Imus, Cavite. TCL also expanded its reach by providing TCL Corners, which offers educational facilities, to the Pasig and San Juan public libraries.

Nat'l Artist reburied at Libingan Monday

THE REMAINS OF NATIONAL ARTIST Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero, which are buried at the Himlayang Pilipino in Quezon City, will be exhumed on Dec. 12 for re-interment at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

An overnight vigil will be held at the Catholic chapel of the University of the Philippines in Diliman starting at 7 p.m. on that day.

The remains will be transferred to the Sanctuary for National Artists at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, on Dec. 13 after the 9 a.m. funeral mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent for the Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero Memorial Scholarship Fund for Theater Arts, c/o Dept. of Speech Communication and Theater Arts, UP College of Arts and Letters, Diliman, Quezon City.

Inquiries may be made at that department, or call Frances S. Alincastre at 527-2192 local 309, Larry Aguday at 924-8589, or Espie Tinio-Garcellano at 926-3031.

Saudi king vows support for peace in south

JEDDAH HOUSE SPEAKER JOSE DE VENEcia discussed the peace process in Mindanao and global inter-faith dialogue and won endorsement for both in an unprecedented one-hour dialogue with King Abdullah bin Abdel Aziz al-Saud, the new Saudi monarch, on Sunday evening in this city by the Red Sea.

De Venecia, who arrived here Friday night at the head of small Philippine delegation, met King Abdullah at the high-point of his four-day official visit during which he also sought Saudi support for the Philippines' bid for observer status in the Organization of Islamic Conférence (OIC) as well as for a proposed second Petron-Aramco refinery in Mindanao and expansion and modernization of its existing refinery in Bataan.

De Venecia led a small delegation of House members in his meeting with the Saudi ruler where the Philippine Speaker became the first foreign leader to present King Abdullah with a national decoration, the Congressional Medal of Achievement given by the Philippine House of Representatives.

De Venecia's delegation included Reps. Hussin Amin, Abdullah Dimaporo, Lorna Silverio, Belma Cabilao and Munir Arbison. Dimaporo, one of the powerful Muslim leaders in Mindanao, read the citation.

During their meeting, the Saudi monarch, De Venecia said, expressed support for the emerging peace settlement between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the last major secessionist group in Mindanao.

The peace process, which has also drawn support from the United States and Malaysia, could produce a final settlement in the next six months, putting out the secessionist fire and enabling the government to launch an economic action plan for both Muslim and Christian communities of Mindanao, the Speaker said.

The economic action plan is aimed at developing Southern Philippines and strengthening the peace prospects in the region, he said.

Rosales rallies flock vs AIDS

By Christian V. Esguerra

MANILA ARCHBISHOP GAUDENCIO ROSales yesterday rallied his flock behind the nationwide effort against AIDS.

Describing the disease as "the deepest wound" in society, the prelate called on the community to give help, love, kindness and compassion to people with AIDS.

"We cannot just turn our backs on them in the hope that if we pretend they don't exist, the disease will go away," he said in a statement.

Health experts describe the local AIDS problem as "hidden and growing." Although there are less than 3,000 recorded cases, they fear an epidemic is not far behind, most likely caused by public apathy.

The Philippine National AIDS Council had said the actual number of people with AIDS might have reached 10,000. The council's head, Dr. Roderick Poblete, said people with AIDS preferred to remain hidden because the public was not ready to embrace them.

He said this attitude was caused by a number of misconceptions like thinking that one could catch the HIV virus by sitting close to someone with AIDS or who is HIV-positive.

There are three ways HIV can be transmitted:

- Through unprotected sex
- By blood transfusion or sharing of needles
- An infected mother can transmit the virus to her unborn child during the last weeks of pregnancy or at childbirth.

Rosales said: "AIDS is real, as real as the victims inflicted by it, who suffer mostly in loneliness, stripped of their dignity, hungry and thirsting for compassion, and sentenced in a prison imposed on them by an uncaring society."

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Corruption may trigger uprising, gov't warned

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FILIPINOS MIGHT BE TOLERATing one of the most corrupt bureaucracies in Asia, but the Political & Economic Risk Consultancy Ltd. (Perc) warns that once they have had enough of bribes and kickbacks, the Arroyo administration may face the danger of a popular uprising.

The Hong Kong-based think tank issued this warning in its recent corruption overview of the region where it tagged the Philippines as the country most tolerant of corruption next only to Indonesia.

"History has shown that such patience can end when other circumstances contribute to political instability and there is an opening for change. When that happens—such as in the Philippines at the end of the Marcos regime or in Indonesia at the end of the Suharto regime—populations that had a reputation for being extremely tolerant of corruption can suddenly take to the streets to vent their frustrations and anger," Perc said.

Former President Ferdinand Marcos was ousted in 1986 by a popular revolt due to the people's outrage over massive corruption in more than two decades of his administration. His fellow strongman, former Indonesian President Suharto, was ousted in 1998 after riots by Indonesia's poor and student protests against his 32-year rule.

Perc said citizens tend to become more tolerant of corruption because "some elite groups are able to act like they are above the law—and get away with it."

Based on its findings, Perc found no evidence pointing to democracy as better than an authoritarian regime in fighting corruption. Instead, Perc said that weeding out corruption depended more on the independence and professionalism of institutions like the police and the judicial courts as well as the willingness of political leaders to apply on their friends the same laws and standards that they want the rest of the citizens to follow.

Perc explained that in many countries in the region like the Philippines, "people who hold political power are able to so dominate national institutions and how laws are interpreted and enforced that average citizens of the country feel powerless to fight the problem and consider it (corruption) an unfortunate but permanent feature in the system."

But unlike Filipinos, Perc noted that when Indonesians were given the chance to express their opinions about corruption (as they did in voting for a change of administration in last year's elections) "it is clear that corruption is one issue that they feel strongly about."

Perc said that elections in "India, Thailand and the Philippines do not result in substantive anticorruption reform initiatives because in many cases the elections themselves are tainted by corruption."

In analyzing the Philippine corruption problem, Perc said that the "powers that be in all major political parties really prefer the status quo to a serious house cleaning." What irked investors the most, according to the survey, was that "many well-placed Filipinos brush aside accusations that corruption is a problem."

"They argue that those accusing the country of graft don't know what they are talking about, that the country has an 'independent ombudsman' who is doing an excellent job of fighting corruption, and that corruption is not really a big problem. This is not a line of argument that is bought by regional managers of multinationals and banks," Perc said.

Aside from having a very high tolerance for corruption, the Perc survey also showed that the Philippines has done nothing to curb corruption and that multinational corporations perceive the problem to have worsened from its most recent survey. Perc also underscored that the Philippines was "the country where corruption has done the most to scare away new investment, hold back growth and contribute to political stability."

Threat closes …

From page A1

It also coincided with the unannounced arrival in the country yesterday of John Negroponte, US director for national intelligence. *(See story on this page.)*

In a text message to the INQUIRER, Querol said that effective 10 last night, "the entire Metro Manila police is placed under full alert."

Querol said this meant intensified "mobile, motorcycle, beat and SWAT patrols in embassies, malls, railways" and other public places.

Operatives of the Manila Police District scoured the vicinity of the embassy on Roxas Boulevard.

Message from 'Evita'

"My men did not find any bombs around the US Embassy after hours of searching the area," Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, MPD director, said in a phone interview.

Bulaong said embassy personnel had called police headquarters at around 7:30 p.m. on Monday to relay a bomb threat.

He said he immediately deployed members of the MPD Explosives and Ordnance Division to check out the area.

ANC TV News quoted a guard at the embassy as saying a mobile phone text message was received on Monday night from someone named "Evita" threatening to blow up the building.

Hotline

The embassy opened an emergency hotline (528-6300, local 2246 or 2555) for American citizens needing assistance while the embassy is closed

Lussenhop advised Filipinos whose transactions had been affected to look out for advisories in the media or on the embassy website (http://manila.usembassy.gov).

The embassy was also forced to change the time and venue of a scheduled press conference for visiting US Ambassador John Miller, a senior Washington adviser on human trafficking, who arrived in Manila Dec. 3.

Instead of meeting reporters in the embassy at 2:40 p.m., Miller conducted a pre-departure briefing at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at 3 p.m.

'Terrorists'

The Abu Sayyaf and the communist New People's Army are the two armed groups in the Philippines on Washington's list of foreign terrorist groups.

On Dec. 1, the US treasury department designated ranking Abu Sayyaf leaders Jainal Antel Sali Jr., Radulan Sahiron and Isnilon Totoni Japilon as terrorists, an act that effectively froze their assets and prohibited any transactions between them and American citizens.

It also announced that the United States and Australia were submitting the names of the three men to the United Nations 1267 Committee to nominate them for inclusion in its list of terror groups associated with the al-Qaida network and its leader Osama bin Laden. *With reports from Luige A. del Puerto, Margaux C. Ortiz and AFP*

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US intel czar in surprise visit to RP

From page A1

would be here for a couple of days to conduct meetings with his Philippine counterparts on RP-US efforts in counterterrorism.

He said Negroponte would also meet with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye confirmed that Negroponte had dinner last night with the President.

Col. Tristan Kison, a spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, could not immediately confirm whether Negroponte would meet with Gen. Generoso Senga, AFP chief of staff, or other military officials.

NEGROPONTE: Unexpected visit raises a lot of serious security questions. PDI PHOTO

The US Embassy had neither issued media advisories regarding Negroponte's visit nor set any press briefings for him.

Airport sources said Negroponte and his delegation arrived at 3:45 p.m. on board a US military aircraft from Alice Springs, Australia.

The aircraft parked at the Old Balagbag/Ages Aviation Inc. hangar, the ground handler for US Embassy flights.

Flight documents indicated Negroponte as a "VIP." There was a total of 18 passengers and crew on the flight.

Negroponte arrived just as Ambassador John Miller, senior adviser to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, was wrapping up his pre-departure briefing at the Naia Dignitaries' Lounge.

Miller left for Beijing via Hong Kong at 4:40 p.m.

Two months ago, an annoyed Fidel Ramos named Negroponte as the Washington official who could best explain the emergence then of alleged US intelligence reports linking the former President to a coup plot against Ms Arroyo.

Lussenhop could not confirm whether a meeting between Ramos and Negroponte had also been arranged.

Negroponte is the highest American official to visit the country in the middle of a thorny episode in RP-US relations involving the alleged rape of a Filipino woman by a group of US Marines on Nov. 1.

The rape complaint is currently under preliminary investigation by the Olongapo City prosecutor's office.

Three weeks ago, the Philippine government asked the US Embassy to surrender custody of the servicemen.

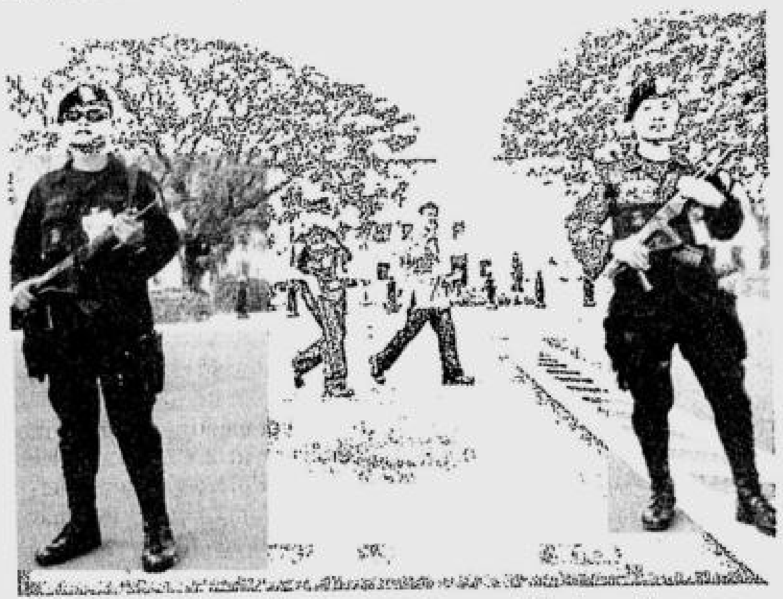
The embassy referred the matter to Washington, and has yet to issue a reply.

The London-born Negroponte is a controversial figure.

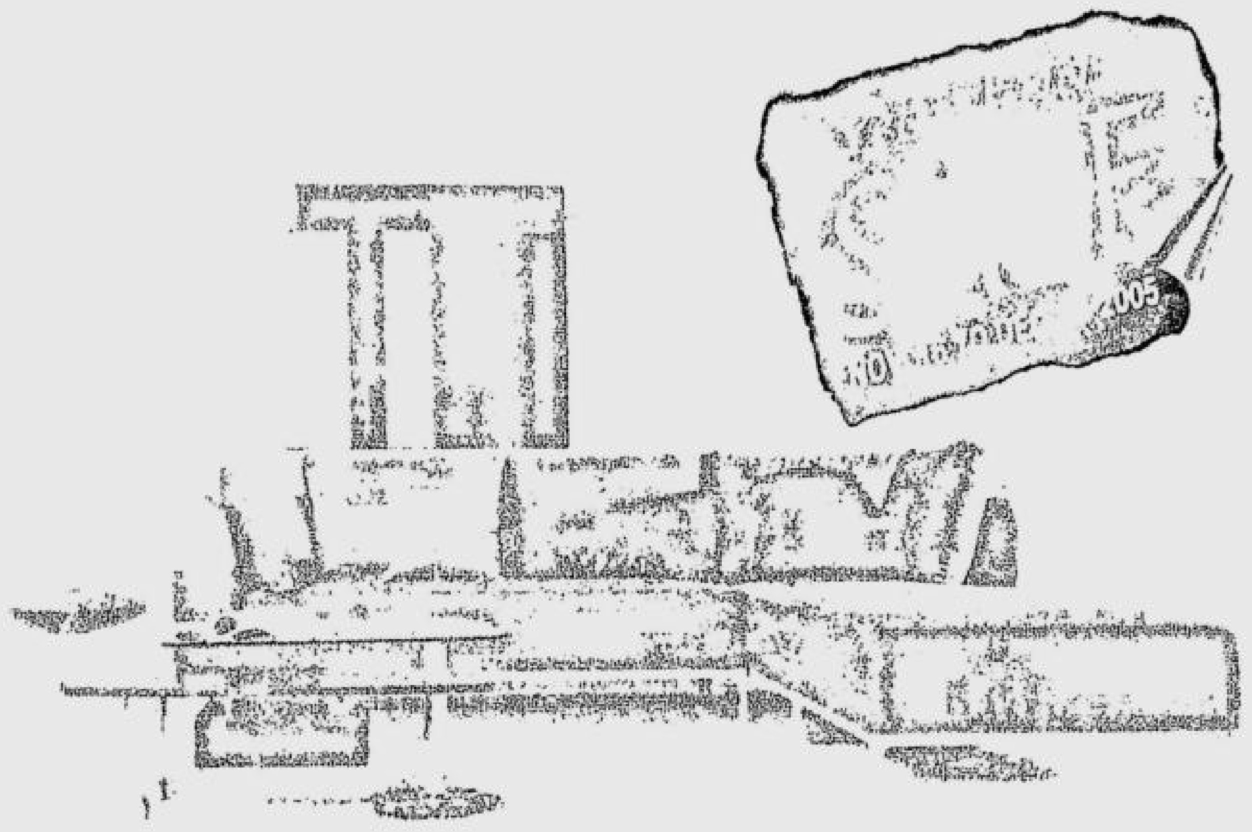
"His critics view him as a symbol of what they consider a dark chapter in American history, when the United States closed its eyes to crimes by Third World strongmen because they were seen as partners in a larger anticommunist crusade," said an article published in The Washington Post on March 21.

Negroponte is said to have been involved in the covert funding of the Contras, the armed opponents of Nicaragua's Sandinistas, who ruled that country from 1979 to 1990.

He is also alleged to have covered up human rights abuses in Honduras in the 1980s by operatives trained by the US Central Intelligence Agency.



NO ENTRY ZONE around the US Embassy, which also reiterates a travel warning to all US citizens and issues a hotline for all US citizens in the Philippines. ERIK ARAZAS



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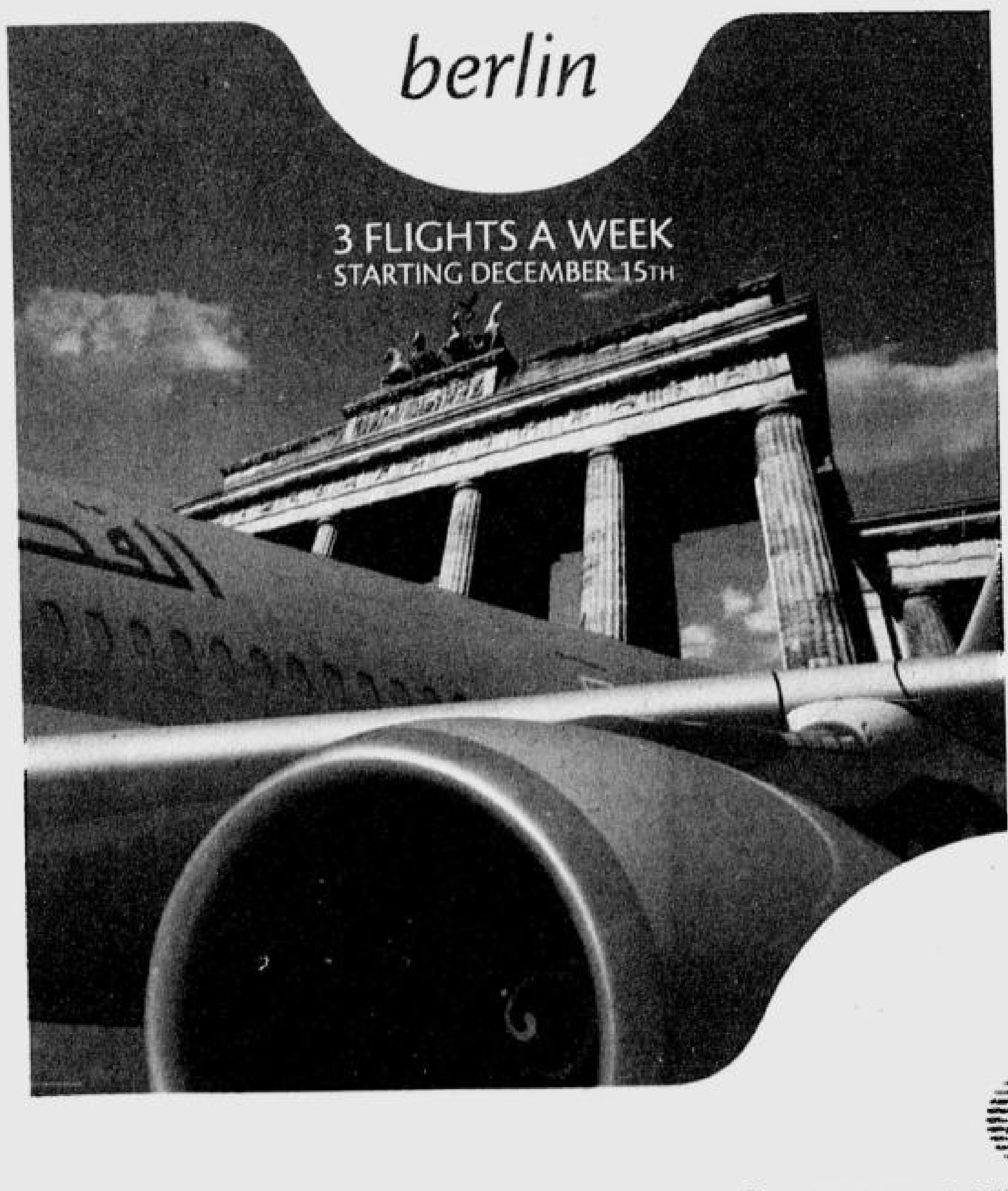

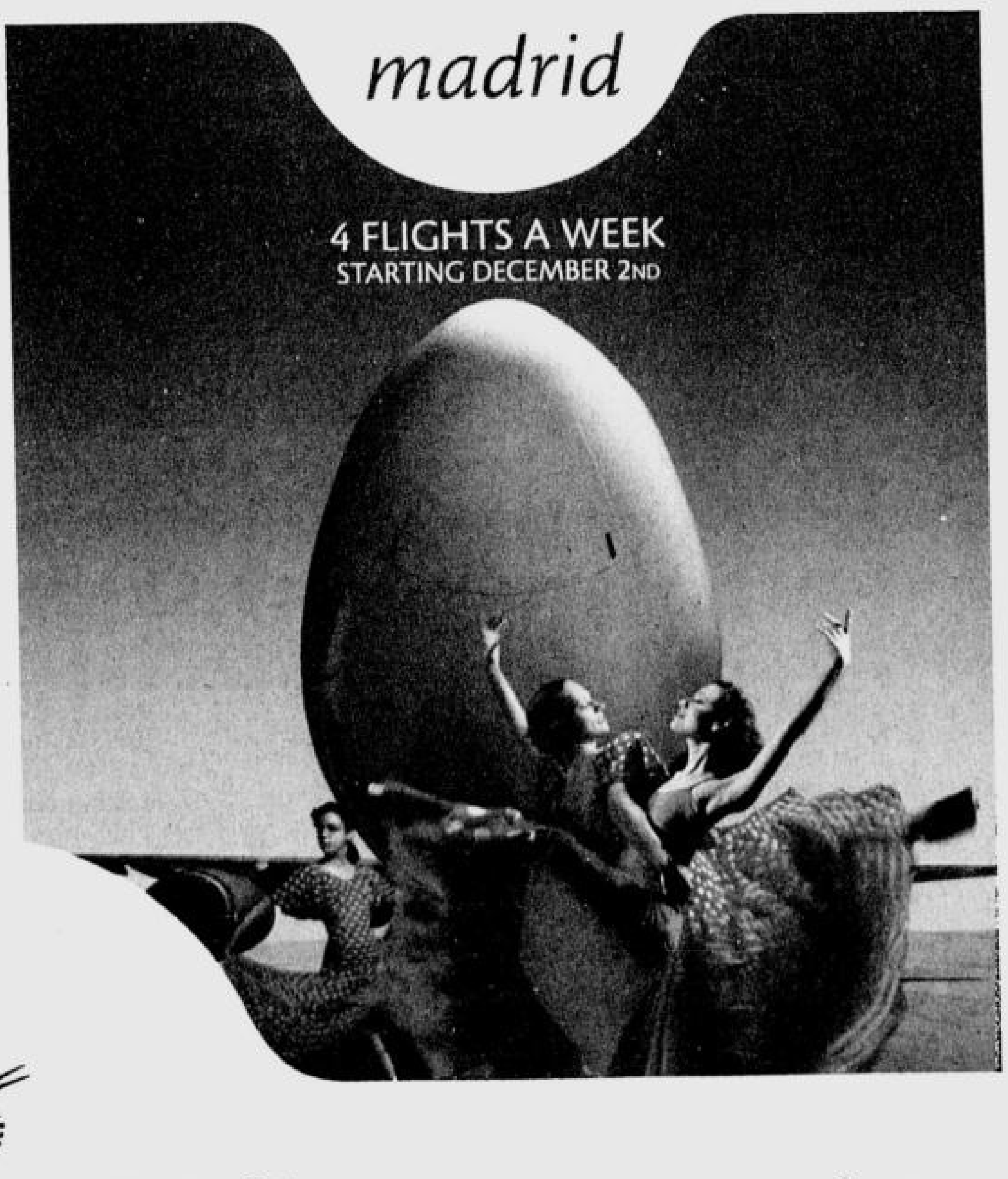

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Garci told talking to GMA is the main issue

From page A1

looking into the "Hello Garci" scandal.

Garcillano's nationally televised appearance before the House is scheduled for six hours, beginning at 10 a.m.

However, Garcillano's lawyer, Eddie Tamondong, had indicated that Garcillano would not discuss the wiretaps, prompting opposition speculation that his appearance today was meant to muddle the controversy rather than clear it.

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez and Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla said they would press Garcillano to explain the wiretapped conversations even though his lawyer said he would not talk about them.

"If he will not admit to it under oath, then we will ask perhaps for a voice print analysis. Let us see who is lying," Remulla said.

Remulla said that Tamondong's release of the names of eight congressmen who allegedly also talked to Garcillano was meant to divert public attention from the "Hello Garci" tapes and its contents. Golez, one of those named, denied he called Garcillano.

"They're trying to divert the issue. Instead of talking about Garcillano and Gloria, they're trying to change it," Remulla said.

He said the public should not give much credence to Tamondong's media statements and instead wait for Garcillano's testimony.

"A closed book"

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said that Ms Arroyo would be too busy to watch Garcillano's testimony on television. Highlight of Ms Arroyo's schedule today is attending ceremonies honoring Filipino athletes who gave the nation its first overall championship in the Southeast Asian Games that ended on Monday.

Bunye insisted that the Palace considered "a closed book" allegations that the wiretaps provided evidence that the President cheated in the election last year.

"The President is out of the fray and undeterred by the continuing noise as she remains focused on the economy, investments and jobs," Bunye said.

He said it was now the turn of some legislators "to face the moment of truth."

The wiretapping controversy broke out five months ago when Bunye revealed to Palace reporters that he had received CDs purportedly containing wiretapped telephone conversations. He said the recordings were part of an opposition plot to oust the President.

On June 6, Bunye played the recordings to reporters and said that the voice in the tape was the President's but that the voice on the other end of the line was not an election commissioner.

Bunye, during a subsequent appearance before the House panel, would backtrack on his earlier assertion that Ms Arroyo's voice was in the wiretap.

The opposition later released its own version of the recordings and declared that their content was proof Ms Arroyo rigged the May 2004 presidential election.

Six-hour testimony

The 68-year-old Garcillano disappeared in the midst of the controversy that sparked the worst political crisis of the 4-year-old Arroyo presidency, widespread demands for her resignation and an impeachment attempt in the House.

Garcillano surfaced last week and gave interviews during which he denied a Singapore government report that he had surfaced in the city-state on July 14 en route to a third country. He said he had been in the Philippines all along, reading and writing his memoirs somewhere in Mindanao. He also dismissed charges he had conspired with Ms Arroyo to manipulate the balloting.

Garcillano told reporters before flying to Manila on Sunday that he would try to demolish the "illusion" that he was "guilty" of rigging the electoral process to ensure Ms Arroyo's poll victory.

He said he would present a "long list" of members of the House of Representatives and Senate who, he said, called him up, or personally met with him in posh hotels across the country, before, during and after the May 10, 2004, elections.

Script for a telenovela?

House Deputy Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano said he was stilll hoping "for a miracle"—that Garcillano would tell the truth. "I hope he will come clean," said Cayetano.

"Any cross-examination, if done properly, will reveal if a person is telling the truth or if he or she is lying. But we don't expect a huge amount of new information."

Cayetano called on members of the House majority not to resort to technicalities, allowing Garcillano to say categorically if he indeed talked to Ms Arroyo and if he really hid in Mindanao.

"We know that there is a script for a big production and *telenovela*," said Cayetano. "If he answers brilliantly and it seems like he's telling the truth, fine with us."

I'm victim

On Monday, Tamondong said 20 to 30 politicians had called Garcillano during last year's balloting. Tamondong identified eight of them. He said they should serve as "character witnesses" for Garcillano.

Garcillano told the INQUIRER last week he believed the public now "has an open mind," thus he had a "better chance" of convincing the public that he did not rig the 2004 polls.

"That's what I'm going to ask from the public ... if only I can give them the real picture of the situation," said Garcillano, who claimed that several other politicians had called him while he was in hiding "because they feel that I'm shortchanged here, I'm the victim here."

He said lawmakers "should not make me their tool" for their "selfish interests."

Destroying opposition

Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran said Garcillano's revelation of the names of several congressmen should not deflect the public's attention from "the fact that the most controversial figure he spoke with during last year's elections was Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo herself."

"The issue of whoever else Garcillano may have talked to during the same period is only secondary to this," he said.

Beltran said it was "obvious that Garcillano wants to destroy the credibility of opposition lawmakers, especially those who are at the forefront of the investigations into the Garci tapes and the campaign to remove the illegitimate president from Malacañang."

Administration lawmakers said the revelation that several opposition lawmakers talked to Garcillano "only highlights the hypocrisy that prevailed all along among opposition personalities in hitting President Arroyo with the 'Hello Garci' tapes."

Opposition reaping bad karma

In a joint statement, Representatives Douglas Cagas (NPC, Davao del Sur) and Anthony Miranda (Kampi, Isabela) said the "opposition is merely reaping the ill fruits of their bad karma, with their members now on the defensive or in outright denial, unlike their actuations when they subjected the President to a concerted black propaganda campaign."

"Now it's their word against Garcillano. This is poetic justice or karma," the statement said. *With reports from Christine O. Avendano, Luige A. del Puerto, Christian V. Esguerra, Armand N. Nocum and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

'Hello Garci' tapes, according to Garci

From page A1

as of the other day (your lead is 892,000)." "Kaya nga e (That is why)," said the female voice, to which he replied, "Pero (But) if we can get more in Lanao."

Garcillano: Assuming that we talked, remember that the controversial tape now which we are trying to contest was tapped on May 24, 2004. And the subject of conversation was the lowering of the advantage of the President over her opponent. She was asking *kung bakit ang kanyang abante bumaba na ng* (why her lead fell to) 892,000 when two to three days before that day, the advantage of the president over FPJ (Fernando Poe Jr.) was more than one million already. I don't accept that I ever said, *'pipilitin ko,' kung totoo man yun pipilitin ko* (I will do my best, if that is true that I will try). If I were the one referred to there, *wala namang sinasabing pipilitin para itaas ang boto ni presidente* (there's nothing there saying we will try to raise the votes of the president). That should be emphasized because the subject of the conversation was no longer election, she was only concerned about the reduction of her advantage over her opponent. *Tapos na ang* canvassing (The canvassing was over). In fact, we in the Comelec knew very well that the results of the elections had already been submitted to Congress. All the certificates of canvass (COC) were already in the Senate, except those places where there were special elections (like) Lanao. Assuming *na yun nasabi, pipilitin na 'wag makaltasan yung boto* (Assuming that that was stated, that we will try not to have the votes reduced) not to rig the elections because we were talking of the advantage already after the canvass (was) made in the province.

***

"Padre, maraming lumalapit sa amin na mga tao daw niyo diyan sa Comelec humihingi, ibinebenta ang boto. Ano bang gagawin natin diyan (Friend, there were many people who were approaching us supposedly your people there in the Comelec, asking for money, offering to sell votes. What should we do about that)?" said a man who sounded like former Sen. Robert Barbers. Garcillano supposedly replied: "Magkano? ... kung humingi sila? (How much ... are they asking?)"

In another conversation, the former election official allegedly said: "Pipilitin ko (I will do my best)." The female voice said in yet another conversation: "Si ano, si (former Sen. Rodolfo) Biazon, nagbabanta. Kung madadaya raw siya, pa-

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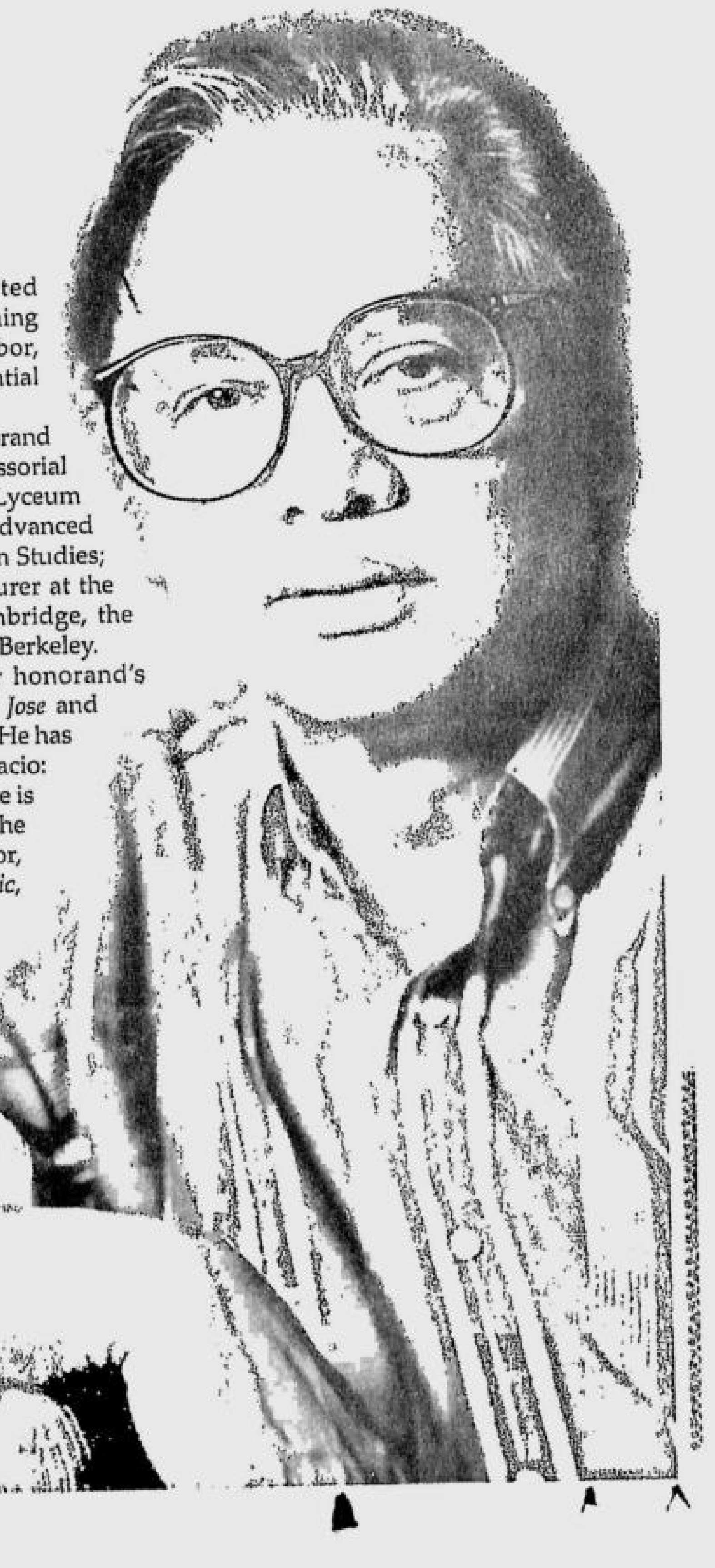

Dr. Adrian E. Cristobal brings up the rear of a line of honorary UE graduates who have excelled in disciplines for which UE is noted—business administration, the law, health care.

For college, he enrolled at UE in 1950, but soon dropped out—his mind rebelling against spoonfed instruction and finding greater challenge where he worked—first at Philprom, the only Filipino ad agency at the time, and then at the US Embassy in the library of which he found paradise.

Like many of the bright young men then, he campaigned for Ramon Magsaysay and had his first taste of Philippine electoral politics. "His Guy" won but the call of politics could not pry him loose from the embrace of journalism and literature. Soon his prose singed the pages of the *Sunday Times Magazine* and the *Saturday Mirror Magazine*. In 1961, he joined *The Evening News* which he served for 12 years as editorial writer and columnist. He did the same work for the *Philippine Graphic* for two years. Still, he found time to write *Filipino First: An Approach to Economic Policy,* which became the blueprint for the economic policy of President Carlos P. Garcia.

It was in the mid-'60s that our honorand started working seriously for the government, eventually becoming Chair of the Social Security System, Secretary of Labor, Acting Minister of Public Information and then Presidential Spokesman.

The lack of a college diploma did not hinder our honorand from contributing to the academe, having been a professorial lecturer at the Philippine College of Commerce and the Lyceum of the Philippines; Vice Chair of the UP Center for Advanced Studies and a full professor of the UP Institute of Asian Studies; Member of the UP Board of Regents; and even a lecturer at the University of Paris Sorbonne, the University of Cambridge, the University of Oxford and the University of California-Berkeley.

But writing has always been the center of our honorand's concern. For years, he edited the literary quarterlies *Jose* and *Diwa* and the journal on philosophy and society *Cogito*. He has five published tomes, including two on Andres Bonifacio: *The Tragedy of the Revolution* and *The Trial*. These days, he is busy mainly with his daily column Breakfast Table in the *Manila Bulletin*, of which he is also an Associate Editor, and with Line of Vision, his column in *Philippine Graphic*, of which he is also the Executive Publisher.

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'Hello Garci' tapes, according to Garci

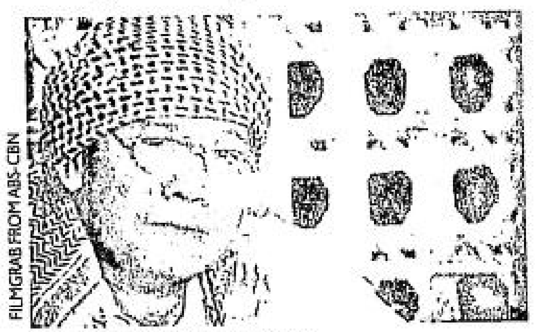
From page A1

pabuksan daw niya yung ano at saka Tawi-Tawi, e baka raw ako ang matalo doon .... Hindi kaya puwedeng ma-delay yung ano, yung (If he is cheated, he will request the opening (of ballots)... and in Tawi-Tawi, it is said that I might lose there ... We cannot allow a delay of the) senatorial canvassing until after the voting and the rolls tonight? Biazon is warning. " Garcillano supposedly answered: "And the rolls? O sige po (all right)."

Garcillano: In fact it was Barbers who called us up calling our attention to the special election. *Kahit na superman ka* (Even if you are superman) you cannot get anymore results because the results were already with Congress. I was the one who called up Chairman (Benjamin) Abalos to proclaim Biazon. Biazon should acknowledge that fact.

***

"Sa Lanao del Sur saka sa Basilan, hindi raw nagma-match yung (In Lanao del Sur and in Basilan, it was said that (the tally) was not matching the) SOV (Statement of Votes) sa COC," said the female voice. Garcillano supposedly replied: "Nagma-match. May posibilidad na hindi magma-match kung hindi nila sinunod yung individual SOV ng mga munisipyo. Pero ewan ko lang ho kung sa atin pabor o hindi. Kasi dun naman sa Basilan saka Lanao Sur, itong ginawa nila na yung pagpataas sa inyo, hindi naman ho kuwan, maayos naman ang paggawa e. (They match. Theres a possibility they would not match if they did not follow the individual SOV of the municipality. But I dont know if it is in our favor or not. Because in Basilan and Lanao Sur what they did to increase your ... it is not ... it was done correctly)" Garcillano allegedly said he would ask the election officer in Panguntaran, Sulu, to hide so as not to be compelled to testify on election fraud.



FILMGRAB FROM ABS-CBN

GARCILLANO emerging

Garcillano: (Major Gen. Gabriel) Habacon has nothing to do (with it)," said Garcillano, explaining that one of Habacon's men—without the general's knowledge—asked the election officer to sign the election resuts of the municipality of Pangutaran (SOV). (I even told the election officer) if those are not the true reports, don't sign it.

***

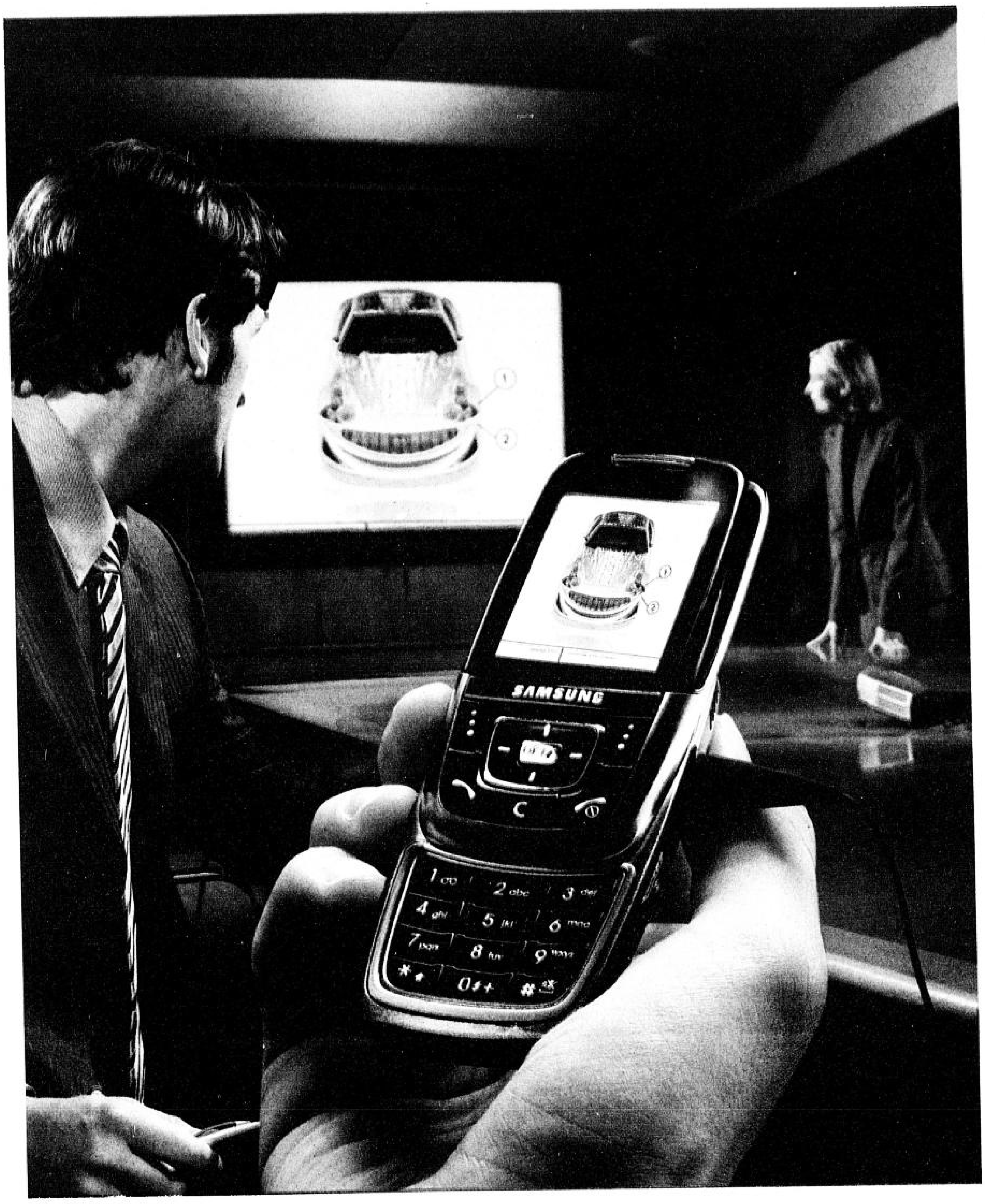
Garcillano also denied Michael Zuce's accusation that Garcillano was present during a meeting of election officials at the house of President Arroyo in La Vista, Quezon City, a month before the elections.

Garcillano: "*Wala ako dun*, much less *kasama ko si* (I was not there, much less was I with) Governor (Faustino) Dy. I've never been with him ever since. *Ano na lang sasabihin nila?* (What would they say?)"

He said it would be foolhardy for him to be seen by election supervisors at the President's house. Garcillano denied that Zuce is his nephew but confirmed that he had used his name to solicit money from politicians without his consent.

Garcillano insisted that the audio tapes presented by the opposition were "spliced, tampered, edited or corrected."

Garcillano: "Whose conversation was tapped, allegedly it's mine and the president. Who is the victim in this wiretapping? It's me. And then why don't they have to compel me to testify on something which does not exist. Because they have to show us that there was such an original tape, if there is. *Hindi ko na rin masiguro* if voice *ko pa yun o hindi* (I cannot be sure if that was my voice or not). I don't know who was that fellow from Bacolod. There are people who can imitate someone else's voice. In fact I issued a statement last election that the most peaceful experienced by this country was the last election. Three days after election, *wala na kaming ginagawa na* (we were not doing anything any more). and I have been used to handling elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. It will take another month to finish election."



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Enchanted evening: Tycoons watch 20 Guyitos unveiled

From page A1

The executives were also recognized as top advertisers of the INQUIRER.

With Filipino songs sung by the Philippine Children's Choir from Mandaluyong playing in the background, competition and rivalries were set aside as the business leaders talked freely with INQUIRER officers, led by chair Marixi R. Prieto, at the museum lobby.

Joining the INQUIRER in the celebrations were Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Ayala Land Inc.; Aurelio Montinola III, Bank of the Philippine Islands; Gil Genio of Globe Telecom; Teresita Sy, SM group; Robina Gokongwei-Pe, Robinsons group; Manuel V. Pangilinan, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. group; Warner Manning of HSBC and Dr. Jeorg Breuer of BMW Philippines.

Off to high note

Completing the list were Henry Co of Ford Motors, George Siy of Marie France, Metrobank president Antonio Abacan, Nestlé Philippines CEO Nandu Nandkishore, Nokia Philippines CEO Parikshit Basin, Gerry Bacarro of Pfizer, Varinia Elero of Philip Morris, Catherine Advincula and Dino Francisco of Digitel Mobile Philippines, Ramon Arteficio of Canon Marketing, and Rico Tantoco of the Rustans group.

Only the heads of Samsung and Toyota Motors failed to make it to the event. They were represented by their advertising agencies Mindshare and Dentsu, respectively.

Also at the event were Napoleon Nazareno, president of Smart Communications, and Kazue Salud, general manager of JVC Philippines.

Acclaimed theater actor Robert Seña sang the national anthem, starting off the program on a literally high note.

The ties that bind

INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez then came on stage to say a simple "thank you" to the people and organizations that have helped the INQUIRER make it to 20 years.

Romualdez described the INQUIRER's relationship with its advertisers as a work of art that only increases in value over the years. And that relationship will be nurtured as both the INQUIRER and corporations work together toward a better Philippines.

Amid hearty applause, two members of Ballet Philippines danced their way to the left part of the stage and pulled aside the curtains that hid the 20 Guyitos specially commissioned to mark the newspaper's 20 years.

'Power of knowing'

Made of fiberglass, the Guyitos were sculpted by artist Sajid Imao and then painted by the artists Malang, Ben Cabrera, Kidlat Tahimik, Jack Salud, Ernesto Patricio, Steve Santos, Lydia Velasco, Fernando Sena, Salvador Convocar, Soler, Caña, Bing Siochi, Roel Obemio, Tres Roman, Wilfredo Offemaria, Bin Samonte, Jef Samonte, Romeo Forbes, Rex Tatlonghari and Anton Balao.

Each artist was free to interpret this year's theme, "The Power of Knowing." The result was as diverse as the opinions, news, features and photos carried by the INQUIRER in every issue.

UP IN LIGHTS: The INQUIRER has come a long way in the past 20 years. It's up there at the Ayala Museum like a piece of art. RAFFY LERMA

Each of the top advertisers got a smaller version of Guyito in recognition of their invaluable contribution to the INQUIRER. They also helped honor the 20 schools chosen to receive the life-sized Guyitos, symbols of a newspaper's gratitude to the Filipino people.

The Lucky 20

The INQUIRER partnered with the Quiz Bee Foundation in choosing the schools, a process that took about six months.

The 20 high schools that ranked highest in the INQUIRER round of the 26th National Super Quiz Bee were picked out of 40,000 schools in 17 regions.

The lucky 20 were Dagupan City National High School, Cagayan National High School, Victoria National High School, Aplaya National High School, Laguna, Puerto Princesa National High School, Philippine Science High School, Camarines Sur, Philippine Science High School, Iloilo City, Ramon Teves Pastor Memorial Science High School, Dumaguete City, Leyte National High School, Regional Science High School, Zamboanga City, Puntod National High School, Tagum National High School, Davao, Kidapawan National High School, Regional Caraga Science High School, Pines City National High School, Baguio City, Amir Baralidasan National High School, Muntinlupa Science High School, Manila Science High School, Camarin High School, Caloocan, and Philippine Science High School, Quezon City.

Fireworks and wine

Popular singer Barbie Almalbis then took to the stage, singing two numbers, before the full house moved to the plaza of the Ayala Museum for more entertainment led by the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra.

Not a few scrambled to have their pictures taken beside their favorite Guyitos. Many of the CEOs stood around to admire the masterpieces.

Seña set the mood for the outdoor entertainment as the guests mingled and enjoyed the laughter, the good wine and the finger food passed around by waiters.

PDI chair Prieto stood up, went to the stage and offered a toast to the INQUIRER and the power of knowing.

Loud cheers erupted as the fireworks and laser light display got underway.

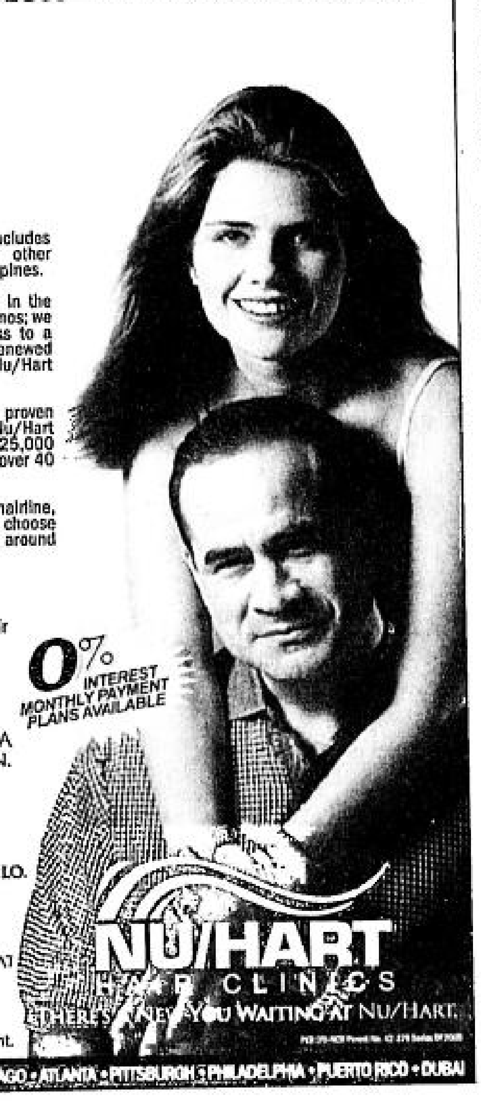
Tarra's night

But the loudest cheers from the INQUIRER staff came when Metro reporter Tarra Quismundo, who traded her jeans for a beautifully cut Filipiniana gown in INQUIRER blue, went up to sing the INQUIRER 20th anniversary theme.

Putting a fitting end to the cocktails was world-renowned talent Lea Salonga, who was 16 weeks pregnant and came straight from another engagement.

Salonga showed again why she is among the best in the business, singing "On My Own" from Les Miserables, her own interpretation of Cyndi Lauper's "True Colors" and "Tomorrow" from the musical "Annie," which launched her career in show business.

A world class talent bringing an end to some enchanted evening.



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DLI Carbocisteine susp. 100 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓	29.00	87.25	58.25/bot
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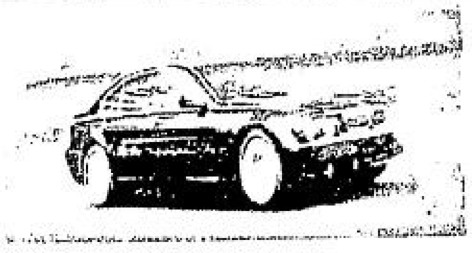

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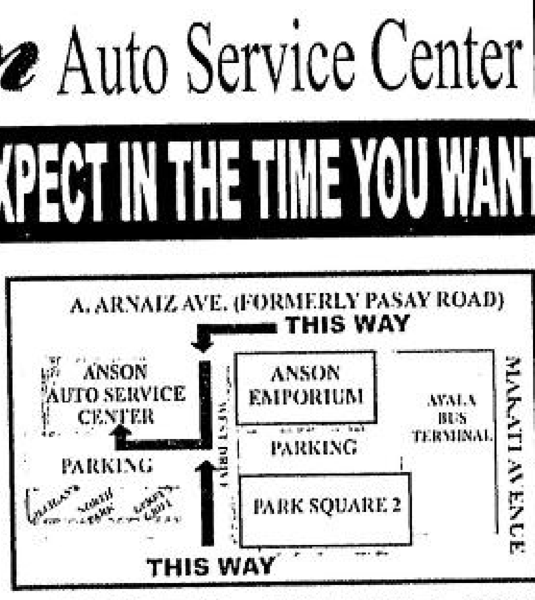

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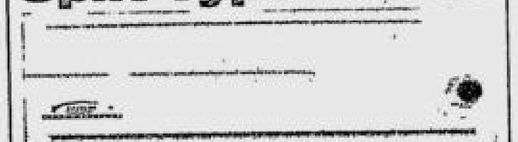

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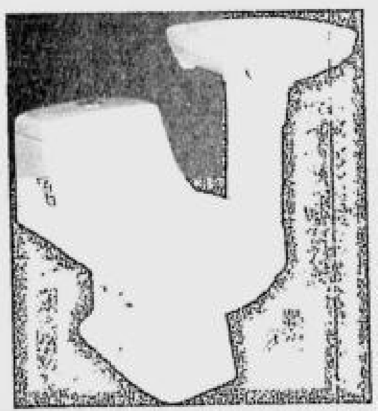

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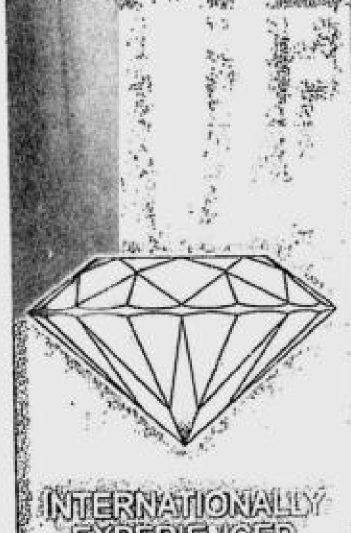

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FOR : ALL ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENTS, VICE PRESIDENT FOR NCRG AND CONCERNED STAFF OF THE REGIONAL AND SERVICE OFFICES

SUBJECT : Addendum/Amendment to PhilHealth Circular No. 03, s. 2005 or the Issuance of Certificate of Eligibility or PHIC Form CE1

In consideration of damaged PhilHealth Family Health Cards, including those with errors or discrepancies thereby causing possible denials of cardholders and/o dependents of their hospitalization benefits by some PhilHealth accredited health care providers, PhilHealth Circular No. 03, series of 2005 is hereby amended.

1. Other conditions for the issuance of PHIC Form CE1
   1.1 Damaged PhilHealth Family Health Cards
   1.2 PhilHealth Family Health Cards with errors and/ screpan

Hence, initials by the LSWDO or PhilHealth personnel on the ors/di repar on the information on the Card shall no longer be accepted.

2. The PHIC Form CE1 shall be used for one confinement
3. The concerned PhilHealth Regional or Service Office shall ensure the imme replacement of surrendered Cards. Should immediate replacement be impossible, the concerned PhilHealth Office shall ensure issuance of new PhilHealth Family Health Cards within one month upon issuance of PHIC Form CE1.
4. The PHIC Form CE1 is hereby revised to accommodate the mentione amendements.

This issuance shall take effect 15 days after publication in the officia gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

(Sgd.) LORNA O. FAJARDO
Officer-in-charge
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After 9/11, US still unprepared vs terror

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES REMAINS "dangerously" unprepared against potential terrorist assaults on its home soil more than four years after the Sept. 11 attacks, members of a former commission investigating the attacks said Monday.

The government has been distracted by fighting terrorism abroad to the point that the country is "not as safe as we ought to be," said Thomas Kean, the president of the now-disbanded 9/11 Commission.

"Some of the failures are shocking. Four years after 9/11, it is a scandal that police and firefighters in large cities still can't talk to each other when they are hit with a major crisis," Kean said.

"It's scandalous that airline passengers are still not screened against all names on a terrorist watch list. It is scandalous that we still allocate scarce homeland security dollars on the basis of pork barrel spending and not on risk," he said.

Kean was speaking at the release Monday of a report assessing the government's follow-up on the recommendations made by the commission, which published a 500-page report in July 2004 on the circumstances surrounding the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. The newest report was severely critical of the administration of President George W. Bush for paying too little attention to domestic security needs.

"Our leadership has been distracted in this country," said Kean, the former governor of New Jersey.

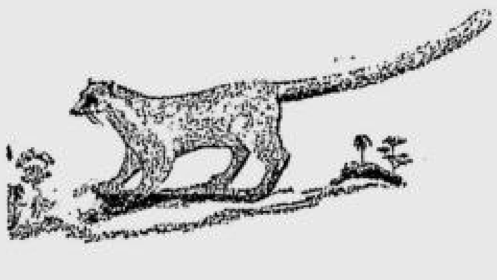
"The United States are safer, but we're not as safe as we ought to be." The report was also tough on Congress for making domestic security spending choices based not on crucial needs but on political favoritism. A leader of the opposition Democrats wasted little time in chastising the government for security deficiencies.

"The report shows that while the administration and Congress are focused on fighting an offensive war in Iraq, they are dangerously neglecting the defensive war on terror we should be fighting here at home," said Senator Charles Schumer. Another former member of the 9/11 Commission, Richard Ben-Veniste, spoke of the risk the free-hand given to the US military poses to individual liberties.

"America must be prepared to defend its values and its liberties as well as its homeland," he said.

The ex-commissioners assessed the government's response to 41 recommendations they made in the original 2004 report. On 18 points it gave the government a failing grade, delivering an especially harsh judgement on the government's treatment of detained suspected terrorists.

"US treatment of detainees has elicited broad criticism, and makes it harder to build the necessary alliances to cooperate effectively with partners in a global war on terror," they said. *AFP*



THIS artist impression shows a possible new species of mammal, called Red Bornean carnivore. AP

New animal found in Borneo jungles

JAKARTA—RESEARCHERS FROM THE WWF conservation group may have made the extremely rare discovery of a new species of mammal in the dense forests of central Borneo, the organization said Tuesday.

The carnivorous mammal, slightly larger than a domestic cat with dark red fur and a long bushy tail, was photographed twice by an automated camera at night in 2003 on the Indonesian side of the island, the WWF said.

Neither Bornean wildlife experts nor locals well acquainted with the area recognized the animal, the group said.

The animal, which has very small ears and large hind legs, was spotted in the Kayan Mentarang national park in the mountainous jungles of Kalimantan, where vast tracts of rainforest still remain. "Most were convinced it was a new species of carnivore," WWF said, adding that researchers were hoping to set traps to catch a live specimen.

WWF ecologist Stephan Wulffraat told AFP that a live capture of the animal was required to confirm it was a new species.

The animal appeared to be a cross "between a cat and a fox" and may live in trees during the day, coming down at night, he said.

The group said it was extremely rare these days to discover a new mammal species of this size, particularly a carnivore.

If confirmed, it would be the first time in more than a century that a new carnivore has been discovered on the island, which lies between the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

WWF warned that plans to create the world's largest palm oil plantation in Kalimantan, along the border with Malaysia's Sarawak and Sabah states, threaten further new discoveries. The scheme, funded by the China Development Bank, is expected to cover an area of 1.8 million hectares.

Environmental watchdogs have criticized the plan, arguing that the jungle soil in the area was infertile and that the elevation was unsuitable for palm oil. *AFP*

US urges China: Set timetable for HK democracy

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES urged China Monday to quickly set up a timetable for full democracy in Hong Kong, where people staged mass protests at the weekend demanding the right to choose their leaders.

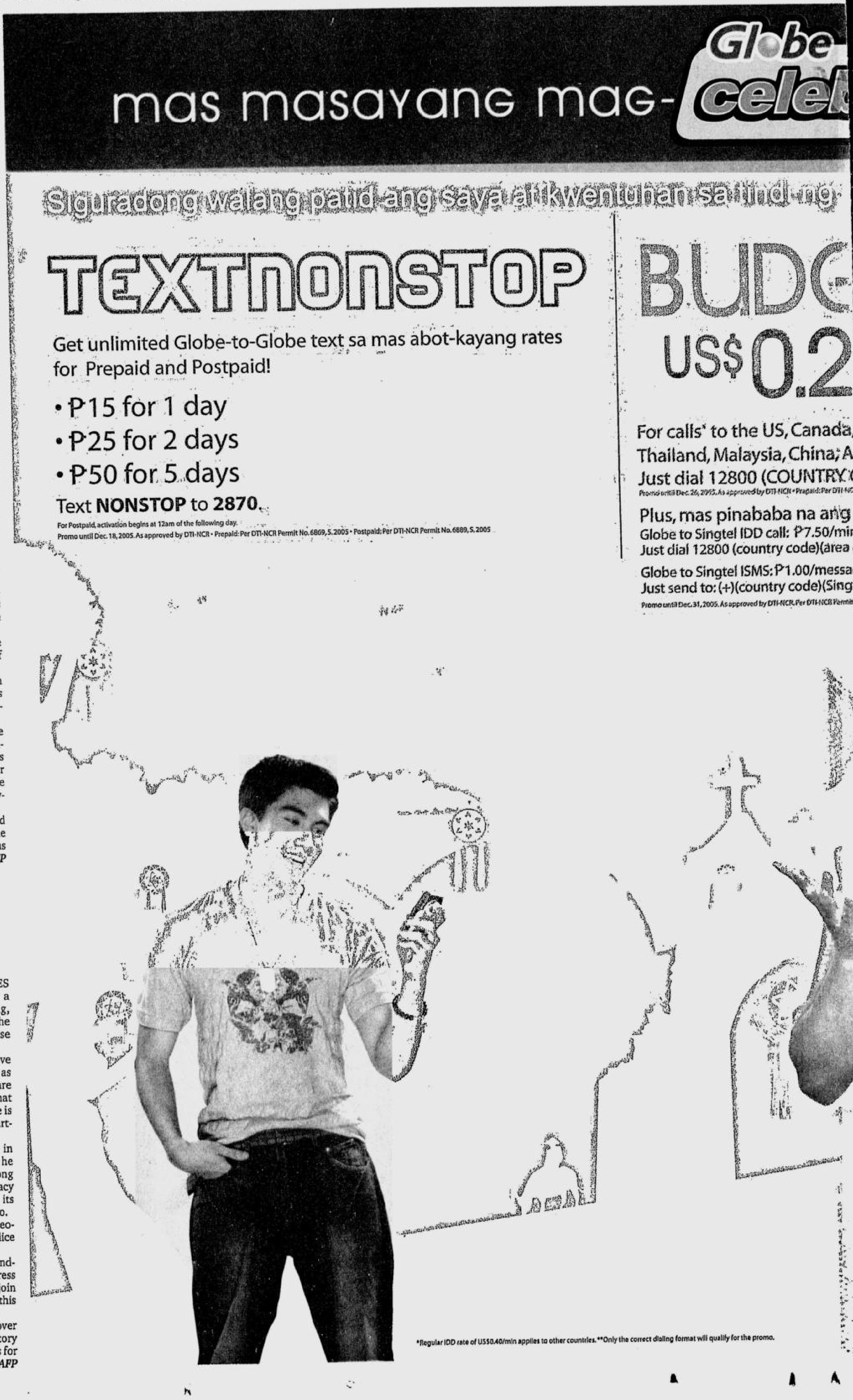
"We believe that it's important to achieve universal suffrage in Hong Kong as soon as possible, that the people of Hong Kong are ready for democracy, and that the sooner that a timetable for achieving universal suffrage is established, the better," deputy State Department spokesperson Adam Ereli said.

"And it's certainly, I think, the spirit in which the demonstrations took place," he said, referring to mass street protests in Hong Kong on Sunday demanding full democracy that was promised when Britain handed its former colony back to China eight years ago.

Protest organizers said some 250,000 people took part in the protests, while the police put the figure at 63,000.

Pro-democracy leaders have also demanded an audience with Chinese chiefs to press their case and called on supporters to join them in yet another demonstration over this weekend.

China is reluctant to cede any control over Hong Kong, fearing reform in the territory might weaken its economy and spark calls for democratic change within China. *AFP*



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Thaksin drops $50-M libel claim vs media mogul

BANGKOK—THAI PRIME MINISTER Thaksin Shinawatra will bow to the wishes of the country's revered monarch and drop libel claims of $50 million against a media mogul, his chief lawyer said on Tuesday.

"The Prime Minister wants to forgive all parties involved for the sake of the national reconciliation," lawyer Thana Benjathikul told Reuters after King Bhumibol Adulyadej called on Thaksin to listen to critics instead of suing them.

Thaksin had filed a half dozen criminal and civil lawsuits against Sondhi Limthongkul, a media mogul who has attracted thousands to weekly rallies at which he has denounced Thaksin as a corrupt, power-hungry autocrat.

Thai newspaper editors accuse the government of using costly defamation cases to gag them and they vowed last week to set up a fund to fight the suits and campaign for reform of libel laws.

"Our legal team has met him and he has agreed to withdraw all the cases," Thana said of Thaksin, whom the king rebuked gently during his annual birthday speech to the nation at the weekend for his oversensitivity to criticism.

The king told Thaksin that Thais preferred to watch soap operas rather than the prime minister rushing on to their television screens to respond to every criticism, alluding to those from media tycoon Sondhi Limthongkul.

Sondhi has taken his weekly current affairs chat show to a Bangkok park since it was taken off state-run television in September and has been drawing large crowds as he lambasts Thaksin for alleged abuses of power.

THAKSIN

SONDHI

Sondhi's lawyer, Suwat Apaipak, told a Bangkok radio station the tycoon welcomed the withdrawal of the libel cases and would go ahead with this week's park rally on Friday.

Political tensions rose higher when some senior military officers attempted to intimidate Sondhi, warning him to stop mentioning King Bhumibol Adulyadej in his war of words with Thaksin. Sondhi had accused Thaksin of attempting to usurp the king's privileges.

During his 78th birthday speech on Monday, the king indirectly advised Thaksin not to overreact in countering his critics and listen too much to the advice of lawyers.

"My legal team has met with Prime Minister Thaksin this morning and the prime minister is forgiving everyone in order to create conciliation by withdrawing all the lawsuits against Sondhi," Thana told reporters.

"I will go to court and withdraw the suits this afternoon," Thana said.

Government spokesperson Suraphong Suebwonglee said that Thaksin was heeding the king's advice.

"The government will fully listen to the king's advice, and from now on this government will accept both praise and criticism from the public and opposition," Suraphong said.

Thaksin has garnered a reputation for intolerance of criticism and has attempted to muzzle Thailand's once vibrant press through law suits, closure of radio and television programs and other forms of pressure. *Reuters, AP*

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Ethical concerns grow on partial face transplant

AMERICAN SCIENTISTS ARE EXPRESSING increasing concerns that the world's first partial face transplant, performed in northern France on Nov. 27, may have been undertaken without adequate medical and ethical preparation.

Some scientists say they fear that if the French effort fails, it could not only threaten the life of the transplant recipient, a 38-year-old French woman whose face was mauled by a family dog, but jeopardize years of careful planning for a new leap in transplant surgery.

"We've been working on the ethics and the science for some time, going slowly while we figure out immunology and patient selection criteria and indications," said Dr. L. Scott Levin, chief of plastic and reconstructive surgery at Duke University Medical Center. "This flies in the face of everything we've tried to do."

The scientists' worries stem in part from the execution of the surgery and in part from news reports that called into question the patient's emotional state.

Dr. Maria Siemionow, director of plastic surgery research at the Cleveland Clinic, who has been preparing to perform a full face transplant, said the way the transplant was conducted appeared to conflate two experimental protocols: the transplantation of facial tissue and the infusion of stem cells from the donor's bone marrow into the patient in an attempt to prevent rejection of the new face.

The first procedure, although untried until now, has been well studied, and the microsurgical techniques involved are commonplace. But the second has been successful in human subjects only rarely and only recently. The French team's decision to perform two novel procedures simultaneously means that it may be difficult to determine the cause of success or failure of the transplant, Siemionow said. "Ethics aside," she said, "it will make it difficult to get clean answers—if it works, why does it work, and if it goes wrong, was it the transplant or the stem cells?" *New York Times*

WORLDBRIEFS

Mall blast kills 5 Israelis

NETANYA, Israel—Five Israelis were killed and dozens wounded on Monday when a Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up at the entrance to a shopping mall in the northern coastal town of Netanya. The attack at the Hasharon mall, the target of a similar bombing less than six months ago, was roundly condemned by Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the United States. Responsibility was claimed by Islamic Jihad, the group behind all suicide bombings since the armed factions signed a truce in March. Police said the bomber was carrying several kilograms of explosives in a bag but was prevented from entering the mall by a policeman and a guard at around 11:30 a.m. (0930 GMT). *AFP*

Strong quake hits Africa

NAIROBI, Kenya—A powerful earthquake shook east and central Africa on Monday, killing at least one person and injuring several others in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), near the epicenter on the border with Tanzania. A UN official in Kinshasa and a medical source in the town of Kalemie, some 50 km from the epicenter, said an infant had died from injuries sustained when the quake caused the collapse of his family's house. Kalemie was seemingly worst hit by the quake, that registered 7.5 on the Richter scale and shook at least six nations throughout the region. In addition to the DRC and Kenya, it was felt in Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, according to residents. *AFP*

Vanuatu volcano may erupt

PORT VILA, Vanuatu—Authorities in Vanuatu are evacuating thousands of villagers from homes near a volcano spewing ash and steam on the island of Ambae amid fears of a major eruption, officials said Tuesday. Mount Manaro began tossing out ash and a plume of steam on Nov. 27 and local volcanologist Douglas Charlie said Tuesday the volcano "is one of the most dangerous in the world as it's situated below a lake." Lake Vui, which lies in the crater of Mount Manaro, could have its bottom torn open by the trembling mountain, causing "a gigantic explosion" as the water hits hot volcanic magma or rock inside the volcano, Charlie said by telephone from Ambae. *AP*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2005

ISSN 0116-2642 INQUIRER Vol. 20 No. 362

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

OPINION

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THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

Publisher **ISAGANI YAMBOT**
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Readers' Advocate **LORNA KALAW TIROL**
readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph
Tel. No. 897-8808, Loc. 342; Cell Phone No. 0917-805-7412

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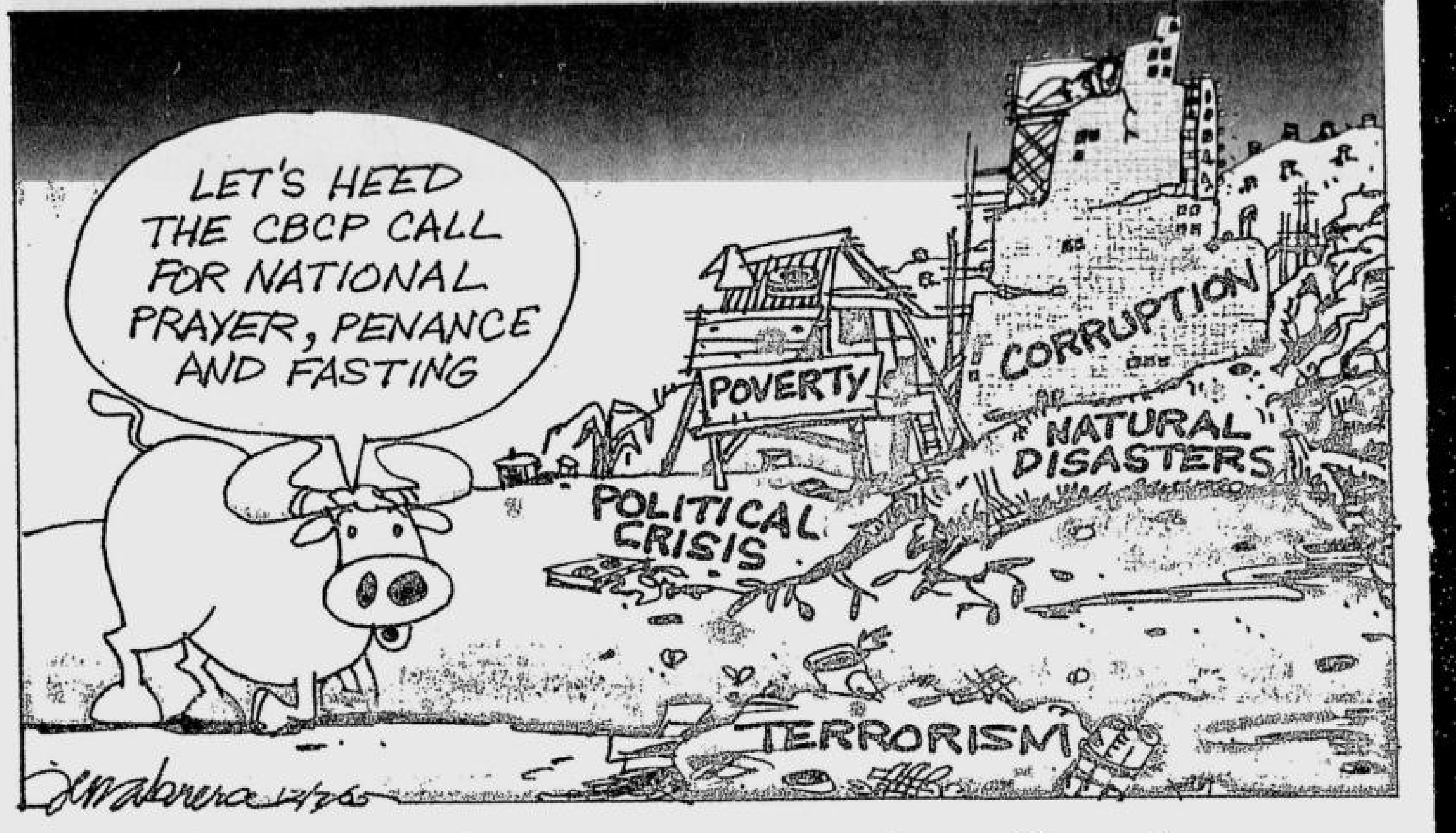

LET'S HEED THE CBCP CALL FOR NATIONAL PRAYER, PENANCE AND FASTING
POVERTY
CORRUPTION
NATURAL DISASTERS
POLITICAL CRISIS
TERRORISM

Choosing the chief

EDITORIAL

WHEN CHIEF JUSTICE HILARIO DAVIDE JR. RETIRES in two weeks' time, he leaves the Supreme Court a dramatically changed institution. In part that is because of the accident of history. The country's first impeachment trial, the second people-powered transfer of political power, his own landmark impeachment case. He did not will or want any of these, but they came his way, and changed the Court itself.

But in part he leaves the Court vastly different from when he entered it because of the imprint of character. A man of intellect and integrity, he showed a reformist bent that many mistook for mere judicial activism.

He was, in a word, the right man at the right time.

His replacement will have decidedly large shoes to fill. Who should it be? The Judicial and Bar Council has nominated three veteran associate justices of the Supreme Court. All President Macapagal-Arroyo has to do is choose from among Justices Reynato Puno, Artemio Panganiban and Leonardo Quisumbing.

She has her work cut out for her. The first thing she should do is to put the so-called tradition of seniority where it belongs: in the dustbin of history.

Consider: If seniority were the only criterion for appointment to the office of chief justice, why even bother to course nominations through the Judicial and Bar Council? In the world of seniority-only advocates, a JBC would in fact be superfluous, reduced merely to endorsing the most senior candidate.

If seniority were the main, though not the only, criterion, why even bother to open the nomination process to non-members of the Supreme Court? By law and in practice, the JBC can consider the nominations of lawyers who have not served in the Supreme Court. This opportunity for outsiders, so to speak, is not an oversight, but an embrace of the truths of institution-building. New blood keeps old institutions fresh.

If seniority were only one of several criteria for choosing the short-list of nominees for the next chief justice, why even bother to include it in the first place? Broadly understood, seniority refers to length of service in the judiciary. An "*abogado de campanilla*," or an esteemed professor of law, with excellent qualifications to become chief justice, will by definition fail the nomination process, simply because of a lack of service in the judiciary.

(The same arguments, with the necessary changes, apply as well against the seniority tradition that seems to obtain in military appointments.)

Seniority, in sum, does not serve the deepest interests of any institution. Preparation for office does.

To be sure, the two are often mistaken for one another. There is no reason why the President should make that mistake, too.

The hundred-year history of the Court itself proves that seniority is not the same as preparation for office. Of the country's first 20 chief justices, half were not the most senior of the candidates. In the even longer history of the United States Supreme Court, whose traditions inform our own, seniority is not even a consideration. The newly appointed chief justice, John Roberts, was still in law school when some of the present justices were first named to the US Supreme Court. Some of the best chief justices, in fact, were complete outsiders: Earl Warren was a governor of California, Charles Evans Hughes was a candidate for President.

If not seniority, then, what should be the criteria for choosing the next chief justice?

Impeccable integrity, against which cheap insinuation or expert political maneuvering will always fail.

Reforming zeal. For many, the judiciary, precisely because it is the non-political branch of government, is truly the citizen's last resort. But reforms need to continue; errant lawyers must be sanctioned, corrupt judges ousted, dockets drastically reduced. (In short, Davide's replacement must continue Davide's reform of the judiciary.)

Management skills and sheer productivity. Given the number of cases that clog the judiciary's dockets, the new chief justice must, like the great Hughes, turn the courts into veritable centers of productivity.

Above all, a non-partisan nature and reputation. We need a chief justice who is apolitical in the best sense: someone who is not only above the political fray, but perceived by the public to be eminently so.

League of Barangays against Cha-cha

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

DO YOU KNOW THAT FULLY ONE-THIRD OF the national budget goes to the payment of interest on our foreign loans? Only for the interest, and not for the payment of the principal. So our debt does not diminish but gets bigger every year as we borrow more and more money we cannot pay. For example, after paying for 20 years for the loan used to construct the mothballed nuclear power plant in Bataan, which we will no longer use, the debt remains the same. The amount has not gone down by even one peso.

Even with more taxes, such as the EVAT and sin taxes, no money is set aside to pay part of the principal of our loans. The additional income is already spent before it is earned because of deficit spending.

All these were revealed by Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the Senate appropriations committee, at the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday. Villar said the sin taxes and EVAT were originally intended to pay part of the principal of the foreign debt, "but it does not look like that will happen."

Legally, Congress cannot appropriate funds unless there is a certification that there are funds to cover the appropriation. But this requirement is routinely violated year in and year out. The ways and means committee makes the certification based only on expected income, which is always optimistic. Expected income from tax measures that have been filed, or are still being planned to be filed, are already included in the estimates. If the tax bill is not passed, then there is no income, but that expected income has already been appropriated. (Technically, Congress has violated the law.) That is why there are many laws that are not being implemented; they contain the provision: "Subject to availability of funds."

Villar also revealed that the budget cannot be passed before the end of the year because the House of Representatives has not yet sent it to the Senate. The budget is usually received by the Senate in October or November, Villar said, "but it is now only a few days before adjournment and we haven't got it yet. The House is busy instead trying to get the Cha-cha going." At this rate, he added, the budget cannot be passed until next March.

"Is it probable that the administration wants the old budget to be reenacted again?" somebody asked. If the old budget is reenacted, the appropriations for finished projects, such as roads and other infrastructures, would still be there and the President can spend it for other purposes.

"Yes," replied Villar, "but then it would not have any increase in the budget."

On the House resolution calling for a constituent assembly to write a new Constitution, Villar said it has not yet been sent to the Senate. "Maybe because they know it has no chance in the Senate. It would only be archived."

"How about the 'people's initiative' which is said to be the last resort of Speaker Jose de Venecia to amend the Constitution?"

While the Constitution provides for a "people's initiative" by gathering enough signatures, Villar said, there is no enabling law for it. And in 1997, the Supreme Court struck down such a ploy, the Pirma campaign, in a decision that prohibited the Commission on Elections from entertaining a "people's initiative" to amend the Constitution without an enabling law.

"Besides," said the other panelist, James Marty Lim, national president of the Liga ng Mga Barangay, the association of barangay captains all over the Philippines, "the people do not want Charter change or a parliamentary government." Lim said they have been consulting their constituents and their consensus is overwhelmingly against changing the Constitution and form of government. When they complete the consultations, the barangay league will issue its official stand.

But the league of governors and the leagues of city and municipal mayors have already endorsed Cha-cha, he was told.

He pointed out that it is the barangays who are at the grassroots. They are the real voices of the people. They are more credible.

Indeed, opinion polls have already validated what Lim said. Surveys revealed that fully 80 percent of Filipinos want neither a Charter change nor a parliamentary government.

How come the Consultative Commission, which is supposed to consult the people, does not know this?

The Con-Com goes only through the motions of consultations. It goes to a city, calls about 300 people to a meeting in a hotel, and presents to them the draft of a constitution it has written. That's not consultation; that's the Abueva railroad, similar to the De Venecia railroad in the House.

A parliamentary system is not for us, both Villar and Lim said. Neither is a federal form of government. We are enamored of the parliamentary/federal system of government because some of the more progressive countries in the world, such as Japan and the United Kingdom, have parliamentary governments. And the richest and most powerful of them all, the United States, has a federal system, as well as Germany.

But some of the most corrupt governments are parliamentary. Prime ministers of Japan and South Korea have been convicted and imprisoned for corruption, and Indonesia has been rated as the "most corrupt" in Asia. All have parliamentary governments.

As for the federal states in the US and Germany, they are very big (California alone is almost as big as the Philippines) and can support themselves. Philippine provinces and regions are small and poor. They cannot support themselves, especially those in the Visayas and Mindanao. Luzon can take care of itself, but not the rest of the archipelago.

Very wrong tack

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I WAS STARTLED LAST SUNDAY TO READ AN item on page 2 of our newspaper that said the Cebu journalists meant to arm themselves. In preparation for that, they were planning on having training programs to use firearms next year. Alarmed by the killing last Thursday of one of their own, radio reporter George Benaojan, who was gunned down in his store in a local market, the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas Cebu figured journalists ought to be able to protect themselves.

Well, there is a reason to be alarmed. Benaojan is the 10th journalist to be killed this year. He is the 36th since GMA took over the reins of government in 2001, making her now five-year rule the most murderous for journalists in this country. And the way we're factoring the killings into our consciousness (like cheating we now regard it as par for the course, or part of journalistic territory), there can be no end in sight there.

I must say here before I go on that while I live in Metro Manila, where none of the killings has taken place, I do appreciate the concerns of my brothers and sisters in the profession who live elsewhere, and who have been the objects of this atrocity. To say I know how they feel is presumptuous, in the same way that to say that to the kin of a murdered person is presumptuous. You cannot know how they feel, you can only empathize with them to the extent that you share a common lot as human beings. In this case, I have the added advantage of sharing a common lot as journalist. These murders must collectively assail us and increase our collective vulnerability. Yes, even those of us in the presumably "safe" capital.

Having said that, I must also say that I find the idea of arming journalists as a response to the problem utterly benighted. At the very least, that is so because it does not solve the problem, but compounds it. You allow journalists to go around with guns, they become the problem. Journalists can be abusive, too, and in a country where there are as many fly-by-night journalists as there are fly-by-day cops—you know that from many of the creatures that suddenly descend on the National Press Club during its election of officers; they stretch the concept of journalists beyond breaking point—we are going to have a Wild Wild West, if we don't have one already. I'm sorry, but I find the idea of the KBP in various provinces being able to give arms and training only to legitimate journalists as believable as the PNP being able to give arms and training only to responsible gun owners.

It is also, not quite incidentally, ineffective. Benaojan had a gun, except that he wasn't able to use it. In fact, having a gun won't protect you from being attacked, even if you have it tucked in your waist all the time. If you're in a constant state of alertness, always anticipating an attack, you won't be able to do your work as journalist. Looking for news requires concentration, interviewing requires concentration, writing and/or broadcasting requires concentration. You devote your time to looking out for an attack, you might as well look for another job, like a security guard.

But that is just the small picture. The bigger picture is that this lets government completely off the hook. Lest we forget—but which is exactly what we are doing—government isn't just tasked to keep the press free, it is tasked to keep journalists alive. The first is premised on the second. You cannot be free if you're dead, other than of your mortal coils.

What particularly assails me here is the way our thinking on the killings has gone. First, we showed resignation. Alas, we agreed, government is truly powerless to do anything about it. We did not find it a source of monumental outrage that the powerlessness was due to the fact that the murders were being wrought by people government was employing or protecting: local officials, cops and soldiers, and crime lords.

Then we showed defensiveness. Alas, we agreed, some of the victims brought their fate upon themselves. This completely atrocious idea I encountered first-hand in talks in the provinces, media people themselves proposing that in this country, where people tend to take things personally, journalists should tread a little more softly. And now we propose arming ourselves so that we can shoot it out with our assailants.

That is exactly how we are being made to think about most things in this country today. That is exactly how we are being made to think about the murders of activist or leftist personalities, who are also being turned into a species facing extinction. This one is even worse because it's getting neither attention nor minimal condemnation. We have agreed that it is part of being an activist that he be shot and killed. We have agreed that most of them brought it upon themselves. We propose that the solution is for them to arm themselves with new ideas if not with better pistols.

And that is exactly how we are being made to think about having a president we did not vote for. We have agreed that we can't do a thing about it, cheating is rampant anyway, that's just the way things are in this country. We have agreed that, as GMA and her minions breathtakingly propose, she and her minions are all the product of a political culture we ourselves have created and inflicted on ourselves. We have agreed, or are slowly being delivered there by our passivity, that the solution to all this is to arm ourselves with a new charter.

Isn't all this idiotic? Have we gotten so dense, so obtuse, so downright stupid we can't see the simplest, most direct, most logical solution to problems anymore? A government can't protect its journalists, its activists, its very own integrity anymore?

Get rid of that government.

Losers no more

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 28 YEARS, THE PHILIPpines won the general championship of the Southeast Asian Games, garnering a total of 291 medals, 113 of them gold, 84 silver and 84 bronze.

National pride, long depressed by interminable political squabbling and gridlock and a parlous economy, vaulted to the skies after Filipino athletes bagged the most number of gold medals, demonstrating their supremacy in about 100 events where the 11 Southeast Asian countries participated.

The Philippines' gold hoard surpassed its previous highest output of 91-62-84 in the 1991 Games, which it also hosted.

In the 2005 Games, Team Philippines surpassed its second-place finish at the 1991 Games, but the Filipinos' athletic triumph was marred by questions raised by Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra about the fairness of the officiating. Thaksin questioned the results in some events as Thai athletes struggled to catch up with the mounting lead piled up by the resurgent Filipinos from the start of the Games. His remarks provoked an outburst of angry nationalistic blasts from some members of Congress, as well as a diplomatic row between Manila and Bangkok.

The Games victory was so important for the restoration of national pride that we threatened a rupture of diplomatic relations with a long-time ally, over an offense we took as sensitively as our dispute with Malaysia over our lost Sabah territorial claim.

Thaksin's unsporting insinuation's did not stop the Filipinos from consolidating their lead, which gave the Philippines' eight more medals than Thailand in the total medal tally. Thailand took second, with 283 medals (87 gold, 78 silver and 118 bronze). The 2005 Philippine medal harvest not only went beyond Filipino expectations but also appeared to be too much for Thailand to take since it had won the general championship 11 times.

The championship in the 2005 Games is especially morale-lifting because it broke the basket-case pattern of performance of the Philippines not only in regional sports (in which it had declined since its brilliant record in the pre-war Far Eastern Olympics in competition with China and Japan and its stellar record in the 1936 Olympics in basketball, swimming and some track and field events) but also in the race for economic development. It broke the notion that we are born losers.

Since the 1970s, the Philippines and Thailand (whose populations are nearly of the same size) have competed neck-and-neck in terms of economic growth and development. In the 1997 Asian financial crisis, Thailand's economy was more devastated than the Philippines, but Thailand's economy has since surged past ours.

Athletic prowess is conventionally regarded as a demonstration of national pride and of national capacity to get things done. This is why nations with outstanding records in the Olympic Games invest a lot of resources in athletic development programs—something that cannot be said of the Philippines.

The country's rare success in the 2005 Games came despite limited funding, and credit for it should go to the individual athlete's dedication to excellence and competitive spirit rather than to a government-backed national athletic development program.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose Cojuangco accurately credited the strong Philippine performance to "better preparation" and to better organization, not plagued by petty squabbling. There was better coaching this time and larger private-sector financial support for the preparation. Local governments helped by providing venues for some of the events since many metropolitan venues are sorely inadequate. The decentralization of the Games venues—for example in Bacolod, Marikina and Tagaytay, which made up for the shortfalls in Manila—saved the Games. Local authorities used their own resources to build the stadiums, partly financed by their shares of the internal revenue allocations and by pork barrel funds.

We can't share President Macapagal-Arroyo's triumphant declaration that "We are on the road to becoming a sports power in Asia on the back of Filipino fighting spirit and solidarity." She had nothing to do with our success in the 2005 Games. It occurred despite the national government's lip service to athletic development.

This victory statement is pure propaganda drivel and capitalizes on a triumph for which all credit should go to individual athletes who soldiered on in the face of tremendous handicaps.

The foremost beneficiary of this athletic glory is the Arroyo administration, which basked undeservedly in its glow. The Games diverted the attention of the nation from the squalid ramifications of the Garcillano tape scandal.

But that is only a momentary relief. Starting today, the nation's attention will shift to the usual bread and circuses, with five congressional committees hearing what Garcillano has to say about what he and the President talked about in the tapes and on who else talked with him about election matters. The Games' glow will soon wear off. It cannot guarantee that we will be on the road to ending the current political crisis.

The Games proved that we can make things happen and are not permanent losers, even if we are left to fend for ourselves. Our people can restore our lost self-esteem without expecting aid from this administration and the politicians in the Senate and the House who are determined to show that nothing can work in this country. It has taken the athletes to show that, with grit and hard work, we can be a basket case no more. And that's what overseas Filipino workers are showing with their remittances also.

Balance and humanity

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

AS THE FEMINIST CENTENNIAL FILM AWARDS were being handed out last Nov. 23 at the Shangri-La Cineplex, I was on a plane somewhere between Singapore and Manila.

But those present at the awards ceremony say the responses of the six awardees were so inspiring they deserved a broader audience. I agree, for as I read the remarks of these remarkable women in film, I couldn't help but regret my absence that night.

Anyway, here are excerpts from the responses of two awardees: Marilou Diaz Abaya, awardee for directing; and Charo Santos Concio, awardee for producing. I'll reprint the remarks of the other awardees in subsequent columns.

* * *

FROM MARILOU Diaz Abaya, who apologized for her hoarse voice as she had come direct from a shoot in Pampanga:

"I am feeling very honored and also very special this evening because in a few weeks, I will be celebrating my 25th year as a film director...I made my entrance into the Philippine movie industry as a 23-year old, a very slim but very pregnant woman and I shall never forget the ordeal which my crew had to endure—to them I shall be forever grateful. I still work with them today. But the experience of conceiving a life inside me and telling a story outside me has become indivisible for me as a person and as a social participant. I guess it was the basis of my first dialogue with the children even as I first carried them in my womb.

"I've come a long way from my first 10 very angry films in the '80s and '90s and just when I thought (I retired), I found myself in the war zones in Mindanao... As a storyteller, I learned that storytelling wasn't just after all an act of entertainment but especially in the war zones, storytelling would actually be an act of healing, of peace-making, of conflict resolution. I think the challenge today, particularly at a time when the number of Filipino movies is alarmingly decreasing but at the same time so many other technologies are accessible to both audiences and storytellers, the challenge for women is to fill the void where action films have already disappeared. We don't really know what the new generation wants to watch or needs to watch, but we would surely love to be around to explore what those new stories would be.

"I just hope that we as women filmmakers can help raise the next generation of filmmakers who will see the world not with one eyepiece but with two eyes. One of the first lessons I always teach my students is the lesson of parallax error—when you shut one eye and experience the world with the lopsidedness of only one sight. Many of us women at least instinctively know that by keeping both eyes open and keeping our hearts open and listening to both men and women, we will once and for all finally enjoy the balance that we all deserve."

* * *

HERE'S the response of Star Cinema's Charo Santos Concio:

"The funny thing is: I never considered myself a feminist, at least not in the activist sort of way. My little epiphany on feminism came through my husband Cesar.

"Years ago, when I was newly married, I woke up at 6 a.m. to prepare breakfast for my brand-new husband. But Cesar stopped me. 'Charo, why are you up so early?' 'Ha? To prepare your breakfast, of course.' 'Why, Charo? We have Manang Lida (our cook then) for that!' 'But Cesar, I am your wife!'

'Isn't a wife supposed to do that?' 'Charo, before you are a wife or a mother or a daughter, first and foremost you are a woman. You are a person.'

"Hearing those powerful words of affirmation from your husband, the words rang with a sincere truth and resonated in me for the rest of my life.

"I always made sure that the women we depicted were not just characters, but authentic human beings—imperfect, in search of completion, in the middle of a struggle—but always empowered, always decisive, and, yes, their hearts were always free to make their own choices.

"The women of my early ECP films, among them 'Himala' and 'Oro Plata Mata,' were women who were at first products of their time and place, but eventually transcended their boundaries.

"As I produced more films, this time under Star Cinema, I grew more aware that a woman's set of values are the eyepiece through which she sees her world.

"For example, Vilma, the OFW mother in 'Anak,' endured years of separation from family for the promise of a good life. But she upheld her sense of duty, fortitude and love.

"Ai-ai de las Alas of 'Tanging Ina' may be a funny character. But she stayed true to her course. She embodied the powerful survival instinct of a woman, this time, spiced with laughter.

"My personal favorite is Vilma's Lea Bustamante of 'Bata Bata Paano Ka Ginawa.' Yes, she was extremely flawed and often, she was misunderstood by the ones she loved. But she did not allow the people around her to define her. Only she defined herself.

"Being a film producer is a wonderful calling, because I get to take a small piece of the characters of my films, and attach them to my heart.

"In many difficult times, I, too, had to summon my sense of duty, fortitude and love. I, too, had to spice my struggles with laughter. But in any role I played in life, I would like to think that only I defined myself.

"Now at 50, I am at the exact age of my husband when he talked to me about my personhood. In those 50 years, I had to be a whole person first and foremost, before I could be a mother or a wife or a daughter.

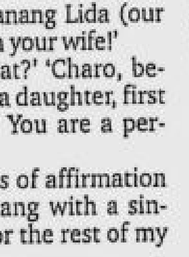
"I am happy that I have come full circle. Now I have come to a completion as a person, regardless of sex.

"In the end, the triumph of feminism is when it ceases to exist as an agenda. Time will come when gender does not matter anymore; only our humanity will matter. *Hindi na pagkalalaki, hindi na pagkababae, kungdi pagkamabuting tao na lamang.*"

Human beings in history

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



GILDA CORDERO-FERNANDO ONCE ASKED ME why I liked teaching so much, why time better spent doing research or writing more books was wasted in a classroom with a small audience. At the time, writing did reach far beyond my classroom, but I did not get the same response—laughter or a yawn—that made me know if I was making sense. With the Internet, this column is read farther than the reach of our paper edition and readers actually e-mail their comments.

Writing is like teaching. Most people who have heard my lectures often comment that I speak as I write. Last week, I received letters from De la Salle University Philippine Studies students Bianca Teodoro and Karl Engracia in my e-mail. These stood out from the mountain of Spam I receive daily. These letters were obviously written to catch my attention and, if published, they will help the students earn good grades in class.

Engracia's letter reads like the blogs that now clog the Net. Still it is interesting to know what young people have to say about history:

"Imagine my horror when I realized that a column I very much enjoyed (yours, silly!) was written by a blue-blooded Atenista. My eyes burn! Just kidding. That would actually mean literacy on my part, which usually comes and goes like the flu. Shame on you if you haven't figured out which University I've been bred in from that opening line, but for the sake of announcing it to the world like it's a bloody Pulitzer, I'm a Lasallista. Spell it backwards, and you get "apathetic," "self-absorbed," or "effervescent."

"Spell it like you usually do and you get what sounds like a German meat substitute. Anyway, opening spiel aside, I just wanted to thank you for that very agreeable statement you made back in your November 23 column in the INQUIRER. The one about Nakpil's notes.

"First off, I always hated history. The subject, I mean, since hating history itself would be pretty much pointless and a waste of any sane man's time. No, I reserve my hatred for the people who have better modeling contracts than I do. Anyway, for the longest time, history painted us as the thick-framed-glasses-wearing underdog who never got anything; a seven-thousand-island nerdling; a blood-stained land with no redeemable quality other than 'surviving' a few centuries of being treated like a dog. As I've once said in an impromptu report during one of my classes (I'm a major in Philippine Studies, specializing in mass media), we need a new story. One that doesn't focus on every bad thing done to us. One that doesn't victimize us. One that should grab us by the collar and scream, 'Now this is something to be proud of, you miserable street urchins!'

"Granted I've only read three or four history books growing up, and that, yeah, we do win some wars; there's still really nothing there that makes us relate to the hardships that our predecessors worked so hard to overcome. There's almost nothing that makes us stop and think about the sheer heroism of tearing up a cedula, or surviving the 'Death March.' I mean, sure, the Last Stand is cool and all, but do we really get to understand, or feel, what it was that the Katipuneros felt before going through another battle?

"The most important thing about telling a story, whether it's history or herstory, is the underlying theme of humanity. Of people that you can relate to, and root for. I mean, I grew up never caring about exactly what Gregorio del Pilar gave us, all because I stayed in a nice home with a nice dog and a little book that tells me he never lived, only existed... But when I found out that he died like one of those heroes from a Tolkien novel (not that I have the attention span to finish one, mind you), my interest and my respect skyrocketed. History is what defines a nation.

"If only because our current events aren't worth relating to (I'd go further and say that they should be completely forgotten, but that sounds so facetious it's almost American!). You see the role of history, for me, is simple: To make us proud of what our predecessors have died for.

"Now, ask anyone in secondary school what the role of history is, and they'll probably say that it's meant to make the quarterly system seem much, much longer. Or that it's the only subject where seeing a hot teacher teach it is as rare as a sighting of the Virgin Mary (a stain shaped like her found in the bottom of a pail of water does not count).

"Maybe it's just the space-age, Ritalin-laced, ADD-addled generation I belong to, but I seriously want my history to be full of people whom I'd give a damn about. With our present being such a big drag, then maybe we can all look to our past for a sense of what the Filipinos could achieve should we actually just take a moment and put our numerous differences aside.

"And if a touch of humor, like Nakpil's, could help us better understand that the people in our books weren't just figures, but real human beings, then we'd be a whole lot better off. History shouldn't be a chore. It should be an honor."

Then as an afterthought or an apology he ended: "P.S. Opening segment aside, I really love being a Lasallista."

If our heroes had blogs, life would be more complicated for historians.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Monks and neuroscientists

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE DALAI LAMA DELIVERING AN OPENING SPEECH AT an international conference of neuroscientists?

That was exactly what he did last month in Washington, at the annual convention of the Society for Neuroscience, and it was not without controversy. Even before the conference could start, some 800 scientists signed a letter threatening a boycott if the invitation to the Dalai Lama was not withdrawn. Their reason? The religious leader was not qualified to talk.

The "anti-Dalai Lama" scientists' protest letter read in part: "Inviting the Dalai Lama to lecture on neuroscience of meditation is of poor scientific taste because it will highlight a subject with hyperbolic claims, limited research and compromised scientific rigour." Alas, scientists can sometimes be narrow-minded, too, harboring the same kind of dogmatism that they deplore in religious fanatics.

The convention organizers stood their ground and in the end, some 14,000 people attended the opening ceremonies, where the Dalai Lama talked on secular ethics and responsibility in research, rather than neuroscience. Nevertheless, the protest letter may have inadvertently generated more publicity for the Tibetan religious leader, including his support for scientific research into meditation.

Brain train

The beneficial effects of meditation have been well-documented, with a broad range of claims from fighting the blues to fighting flu, but scientists tend to scoff at these findings as being "psychological," that people's feelings of well-being and health are "all in the mind." More recent research shows that the effects may be based on very real changes going on in the brain's anatomy and physiology.

On one hand, the neurological studies tell us the brain is much more vulnerable than we first thought. From the fetal stage to old age, our brain is prone to adverse effects brought on by all kinds of external stimuli, from bad diets affecting the parts of the brain dealing with memory, to a break-up with a lover affecting the brain regions that control physical pain . . . so yes, heart break can indeed be painful in more than a figurative way.

On the positive side, there is much research to suggest how you can reverse some of the problems brought about by brain trauma and assault—changing diets, for example, and exercising, as well as meditation.

Meditation comes through in the research as a way of training the brain, and our understanding of these cerebral work-out routines comes in tandem with new discoveries about the intricacies of brain structure and function. I'm particularly amused, but not surprised, with studies linking language and music acquisition. Here's a pitch again for learning Mandarin or Putonghua, the Chinese national language: an admittedly small study found that kids who learned Putonghua had better musical sense, which is not surprising since Chinese languages are tonal, just like music. Another study released at the Washington conference by Stanford University found that musical training improves language learning. Which makes sense since learning to read notes and play a musical instrument "exercises" parts of the brain that distinguish rapidly changing sounds.

Scientists used to think that the brain is immutable, fixed at birth. Now we're realizing you can bring about changes by exercising or training the brain, whether through music lessons, learning a new language, or meditation. One of the papers presented at the Washington conference from the Massachusetts General Hospital's Psychiatric Neuroimaging Research Program described changes in certain brain regions among experienced meditators: the prefrontal context, which is important for higher thought and planning, as well as the insula on the right region, which integrates emotions, thought and senses. In non-meditators, the cortex usually thins with age.

Beyond physiology

The Massachusetts research is encouraging because it didn't look at Buddhist monks with many years of experience; instead it studied meditation practitioners in the US who meditate only 20 to 60 minutes a day, often without the trappings of Eastern religions (for example, incense). In other words, "ordinary" people, who raise families and work in offices, can reap the benefits of different types of meditation.

Another paper presented at the convention showed how meditation can be more effective than a nap to improve alertness and the performance of particular tasks. Meditation's wakefulness, it seems, can be paradoxically soothing. Last year, there was a spate of articles around the way meditation seems to work on the amygdala, a walnut-like structure in the brain that affects our fears and anxieties. Wonderful, I thought, this idea that meditation may actually be a matter of taming the amygdala.

Ironically, the dogmatic scientist's hyperactive amygdala seems mainly to generate fears about religion mixing with science, for example, that beliefs in reincarnation will distort the research around meditation.

I doubt it. The research around meditation in fact suggests that it works independently of one's religious beliefs. The relaxation responses can be elicited not just by meditation but by repeated actions, from swaying and chanting to fingering prayer beads, whether these are Catholic, Buddhist or Muslim. Meditating monks certainly have no monopoly on happiness and well-being, in the same way that I've met people who meditate all the time but continue to be mean and spiteful.

My guess is that you can train the brain to generate blissful and calming feelings, but how or if that bliss gets transformed into kindness and compassion still depends on your personal beliefs, but without one religion being better than the other.

The Dalai Lama, in fact, offered some intriguing food for thought at the Washington conference, as he called for secular ethics: "By invoking fundamental ethical principles, I am not advocating a fusion of religious ethics and scientific inquiry. Rather, I am speaking of what I call 'secular ethics' that embrace the key ethical principles, such as compassion, tolerance, a sense of caring, consideration of others, and the responsible use of knowledge and power—principles that transcend the barriers between religious believers and nonbelievers, and followers of this religion or that religion."

The furor over the Dalai Lama seems strange given the immense problems we face today as right-wing Christian fundamentalists flash their credentials as scientists to oppose the teaching of Darwinian evolution because this is "atheistic" or block sex education in schools because this supposedly leads to teenage pregnancies and abortion. In the end, it is these so-called scientists' fear of imagination and lack of trust in people that hamper the unleashing of the human mind's full potentials.

Politics can destroy Samar forests

AMANDO DORONILA is correct: the Samar forests have been used as a political trade-off. In exchange for his siding with the administration and for his vote to confirm the appointment of the Environment Secretary Michael Defensor, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's logging company has been rewarded with the right to plunder the wealth of Samar's forests. No other conclusion can be drawn from the Aug. 16 order of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Enrile showed arrogance when he said: "If the environmentalists want to expropriate my property, let them do it. But they can't tell me how to handle our rights."

The Samar forests are his property? When did he plant trees in Samar, if at all? As a lawyer, he knows very well that what he has been given is not a right but a concession, a privilege which at any time may be revoked or cancelled by the State when overriden by public interests.

"We are not going to destroy the forest," Enrile assured. "We will preserve it. We are not unscrupulous people who will just cut down trees right and left."

If that were true, then how come the tragic floods of 1989 occurred? Simply because Enrile and other loggers had destroyed the forests. A satellite view of the Samar island at Google Earth will show that the greenest part of the island is in the center, and it does not even constitute 50 percent of the island.

The forests may have overcome near-death caused by logging done prior to 1989, but there has been no full recovery yet. And now the lifting of the logging moratorium and the revival and "extension" of Enrile's "logging rights" in Samar. Truly, this administration's priorities have been skewed by what Sen. Richard Gordon calls "transactional politics."

—ALAN TAN,
alan2563@yahoo.com

Throwing the baby with the bathwater

FOR AT LEAST AS MANY TIMES IN THE LAST four years, Filipino lawmakers are up in arms against US troops in the Philippines despite the undeniable success of Balikatan exercises and humanitarian relief efforts. (PDI 11/16-23/05)

The reason for this is the rape of a 22-year-old Filipina allegedly by at least five US Marines last Nov. 2.

Six weeks earlier, lawmakers were accusing the US of espionage for submitting their analyses of RP news stories to their superiors in Washington. Confidential dispatches on these analyses had earlier been stolen by a Filipino-American employee of the FBI and then passed on to an accomplice for transmission to Manila before both were caught and arrested.

Both cases are now being prosecuted in a high-profile manner: the rape in the Philippines; the espionage in the US; while patriots in both countries debate on their implications on an alliance, an exercise which, in my opinion, is stupid because the US Navy was bounced out of Subic many years ago.

A costly reaction to years of American self-interest, followed by reductions in US foreign aid and ambassadorial presence, is still rubbing people the wrong way—including INQUIRER columnist Conrado de Quiros, without whose input on important issues I'd still be clueless.

These are a lot of reasons for ignoring all the rhetoric and supernumeraries, and just let RP and US jurisprudence do its work and move on.

Holding the Visiting Forces Agreement hostage to leverage opinion in or out of court is like throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Just ask the mom whose child was nursed back to health by US Army medics and modern medicine somewhere in Mindanao, in a faraway place nobody has ever heard of.

—ELLIOTT ANDERSON,
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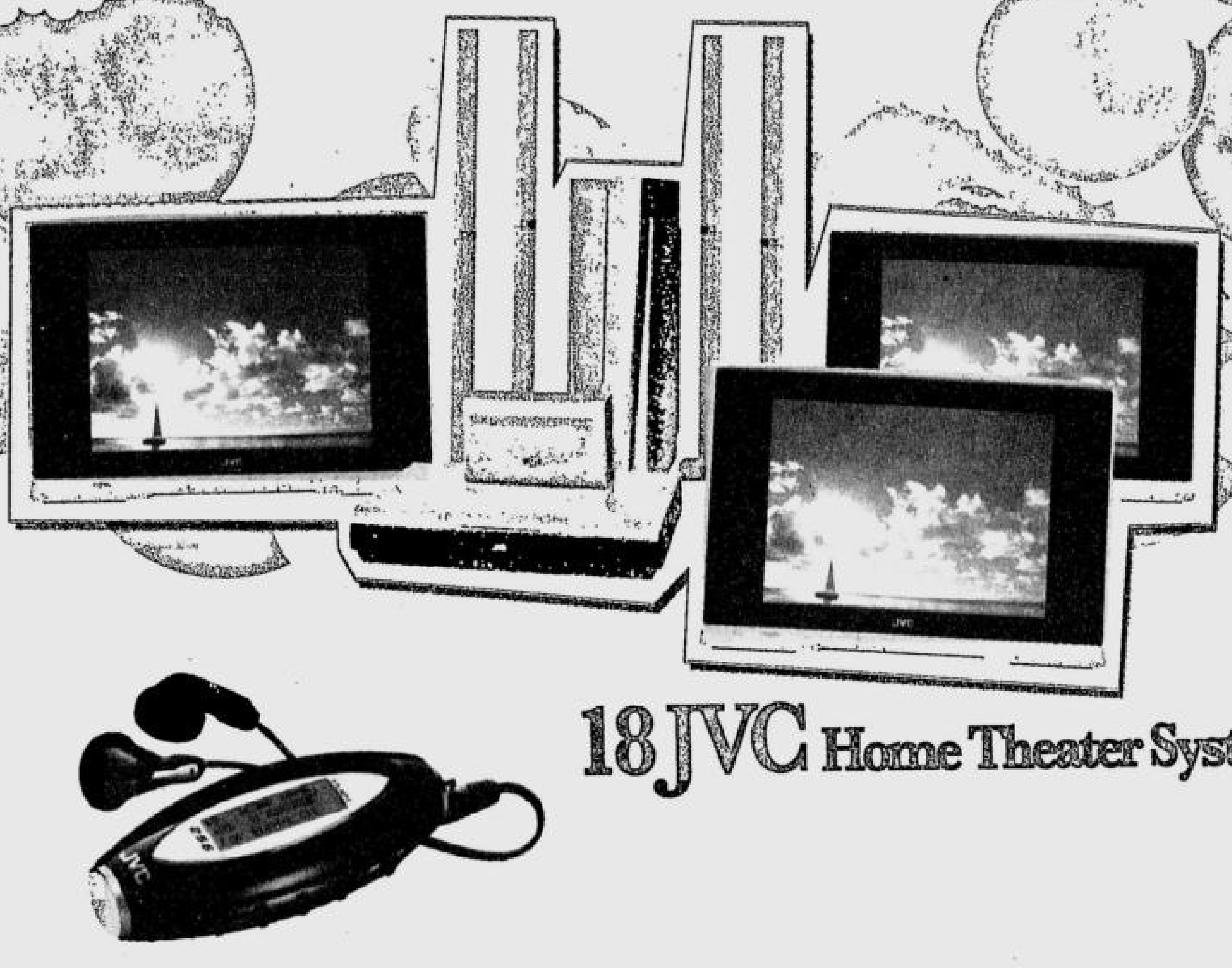

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Clark white elephant revived

By Tonette Orejas
Clark Special Economic Zone

THE EXPO PILIPINO, THE 60-hectare park that tried to showcase the achievements of Filipinos in their first 100 years as a nation, is being primed for reopening after six years of idleness and a string of scandals.

The Arroyo administration is hoping to give the Expo Pilipino—now called the "Clark Expo"—an auspicious start, choosing Dec. 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, for its soft launch.

The administration also agreed to make the Expo's 35,000-seat Freedom Ring amphitheater the venue for the final edition of reality TV blockbuster "Pinoy Big Brother" on Dec. 10.

"*Ang Expo ay para sa atin, para sa bayan* (The Expo is for Filipinos, for the nation)," said Clark Development Corp. president Antonio Ng, noting the ongoing efforts to rehabilitate the P3-billion park.

He said the Expo has suffered from deterioration and cases of looting since it was closed in 1999.

Until the government stepped in this month, the decay is indeed all around.

The park's entrance is devoid of the 100 x 50-meter Philippine flag. In several structures, the paint had peeled off or their surfaces cracked. Wild vines and grasses sprouted all over the place. Rust had eaten whatever metal piece there is. Electrical wires and bulbs are missing.

So far, only the amphitheater—the most controversial piece because its construction entailed twice the cost of its original budget—has been maintained, making it feasible for occasional concerts and political rallies.

Trade Assistant Secretary Angel Pelayo said the "grand reopening" of the Expo as a trade exhibit, educational and amusement center had been set for April 4 next year, in time for President Macapagal-Arroyo's 59th birthday.

The state-owned CDC, the Department of Trade and Industry, and Presidential Adviser for North Luzon Renato Diaz are tasked with reviving the Expo.

Rehabilitation

"We are mobilizing internal CDC resources and people for the rehabilitation to reduce out-of-pocket costs," said Ng.

Initially, he said, the cost of the materials would reach around P3 million. The rehabilitation budget is expected to cost around P10 million.

Not all of the park will be spruced up, though. Work will be concentrated on the 1.5-hectare Global City, the Barasoain Complex that is part of the Colonial Plaza, and the amphitheater.

The Global City, which has two trade halls, will house 150 product exhibitors from the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon and the Cordillera.

"We want to highlight the 'One Town, One Product' concept. We want to give small and medium enterprises a showcase for their items, hoping this will increase their sales, provide them opportunities for benchmarking, compare merchandise, and get ideas for design, packaging and pricing," Pelayo said.

Ng said the rehabilitation and development of other features of the Expo—the Ancient Plaza, Millennium Hall and Fun Zone—would be offered to outside investors.

Centennial scam

The Arroyo administration, however, appeared to be making no bid to reopen the so-called Centennial Scam that had lent an embarrassing contrast to the historical milestone that was the centennial of Philippine Independence.

The Senate's blue ribbon committee and the Independent Citizens' Committee created by then President Joseph Estrada and led by former Sen. Rene Saguisag each released findings of irregularities in separate reports in February 1999.

The Senate report recommended the prosecution of former President Fidel V. Ramos, Public Works Secretary Gregorio Vigilar, Budget Secretary Salvador Enriquez, Trade Secretary Cesar Bautista, Environment Secretary Victor Ramos and Agriculture Secretary Salvador Escudero III for "technical malversation or misapplication of public funds."

Also recommended for prosecution were former Vice President Salvador Laurel, chair of the National Centennial Corp. and Philippine Centennial Exposition '98 Corp. (Expocorp), NCC president Teodoro Peña, former CDC president Romeo David, Bases Conversion Development Authority Chair Victorino Basco, and former Philippine National Construction Corp. president Rogelio Luis.

Cleared

Comparing the Senate and Saguisag reports, a study by Amado Mendoza Jr., associate professor at the the University of the Philippines' Department of Political Science, said the "result was basically the same except that the 'blame' was shifted more to Laurel."

"Ramos and his former Cabinet members claimed that the findings were politically motivated and designed to draw attention away from a textbook scam involving a relative of Estrada and his budget minister, Benjamin Diokno," said Mendoza.

Then Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, an appointee of Ramos, had cleared the former president in February 2000. Laurel was cleared before he died in 2004.

What the two committees "failed" to uncover, Mendoza said, was that the centennial project was "used as a cover for raising funds for the Lakas [election] campaign," as a Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism report found.

The Saguisag committee, he said, "failed to report on another possible scandal." This was the ownership of 200 hectares in Clark by Global Clark Assets, the original private sector partner of the government in the centennial project.

The involved officials, the Senate committee said, gave P7.3 billion to the Expo Pilipino, whose original cost grew from P1.9 billion to P2.4 billion, and its related projects from out of savings or from appropriations for centennial projects. The centennial celebration also received P192.1 million in private donations.

Ms Arroyo tried to revive the Expo Pilipino in 2003 but failed.

Ng, the fifth CDC president to hurdle the Expo challenge, is now tasked with leading the second attempt to revive the idle government asset.

He said he had to work outside of the 2003 proposal, which has been set aside. The plan, under Administrative Order No. 63, called for the transfer of the NDC's assets and liabilities in the FCCC to the CDC.

"The parties could not agree," Ng said.

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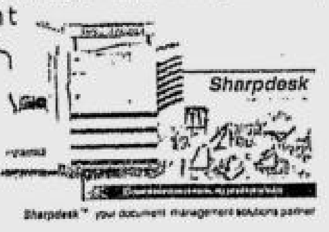
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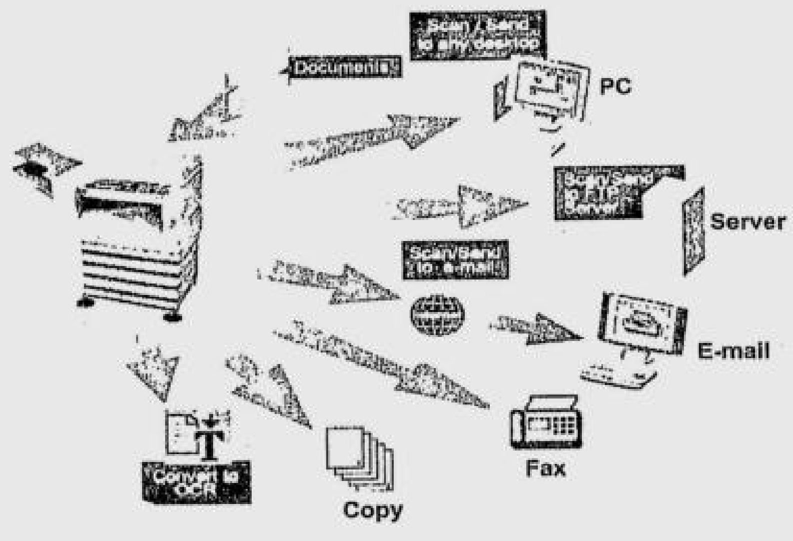

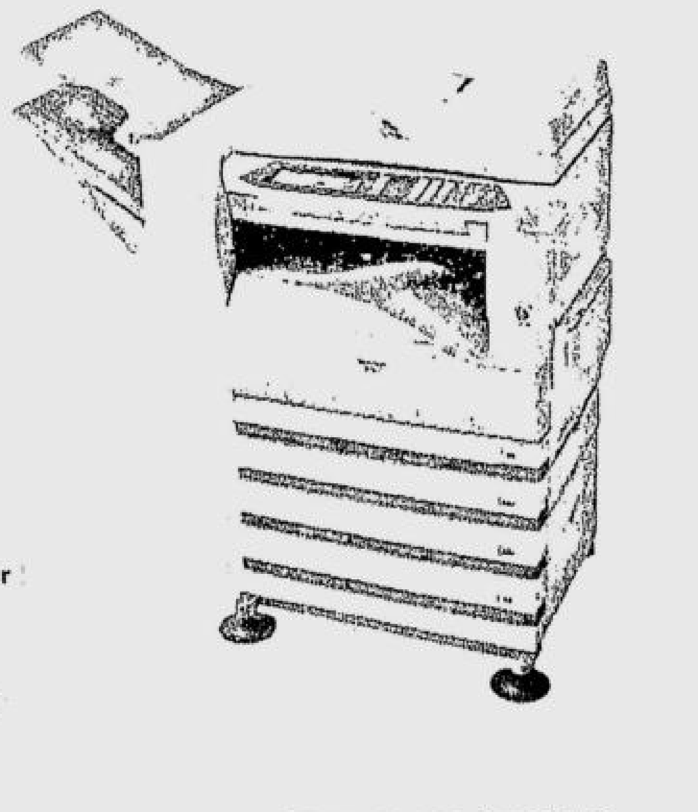

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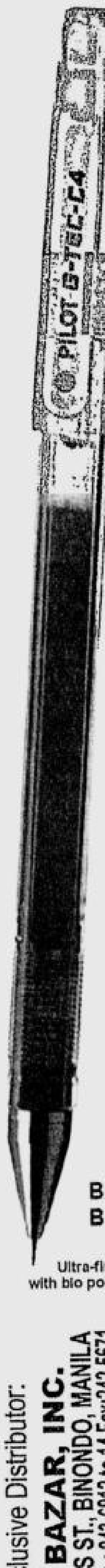

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Flooding prompts Quezon evacuation

LUCENA CITY—MORE THAN 12,000 RESIDENTS FROM at least 14 villages of Lucena City have been evacuated to safer grounds as floods continue to rise.

In Mabitac, Laguna, the Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council (MDCC) has advised around 9,000 residents of eight barangays to prepare for evacuation if the downpour continued.

Emy Madla, Lucena City social worker, said at least 15 houses have been swept by river current coming from the upstream of Mt. Banahaw.

Heavy rains continued to fall in Quezon province since Monday evening.

The evacuees were moved to several schools and barangay halls serving as evacuation centers.

Rommel Tan, DPWH district engineer, said landslides in Sta. Catalina Village in Atimonan, Quezon killed two persons—Froilan Calinog and a certain Boyet Aranilla.

Classes in all schools were suspended since yesterday noon.

Floods isolated the villages of Tinandong and San Isidro in Atimonan.

Rivers in Mabitac, according to MDCC head Sandy Dorado, were about to overflow.

"This early, we are already warning residents to prepare and if possible, start transferring to safer places," said Dorado.

Residents of Barangays Lambak, Bayanihan, Pag-asa, Masikap, Libis ng Nayon, Sinagtala, San Antonio, and Nanguma were told to move out.

These barangays have about 9,000 residents, Dorado said.

Dorado said about one-fourth of the 1,021 hectares of rice plantations in the town were still to be harvested while the remaining areas were already being prepared for planting.

In Siniloan and Sta. Maria towns, officials said they were hoping the rains would stop.

Carlo Realiza, Siniloan agriculturist, said farmers have already harvested their palay and were now preparing for another planting season, which starts late December.

He said Siniloan ricefields have a total plantable area of 600 hectares in the rainy season.

Romeo Panisales, of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council, said they were monitoring the four disaster-prone towns of Sta. Maria, Mabitac, Famy and Siniloan. *Delfin Mallari Jr. and Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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Kidnapped engineer escapes Pentagon gang

CAMP SIONGCO, MAGUINDANAO—The 69-year-old engineer, who was abducted by the Pentagon Gang from North Cotabato, escaped shortly before noon Tuesday, the military said.

Maj. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala, commander of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said Bravick Araral escaped from the Pentagon gang in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

Araral was snatched on Nov. 21 by bonnet-wearing men while on his way to his farm in Libungan, North Cotabato.

His captors have since transferred him to various locations.

In a subsequent raid in Midsayap, North Cotabato during a pay-off for Araral, authorities backed by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) arrested three of Araral's captors.

Arrested on Nov. 30 were Ibrahim Sagandal, 38, alias Jun Sarat and Mike Candao, a key leader of the Pentagon gang and his men, Manrudin Sainudin, 21, and Faisal Guialoson, 28.

During the raid, authorities recovered Araral's clothes and some P114,000 in cash, which police said, was part of the P2.1 million ransom the [illegible]ily paid to the Pentagon.

[illegible] spokesperson Eid Kabalu said Saga[illegible] was also the main suspect in the abduction of a Cotabato City businessman.

"He was behind the abduction of businessman Benny Kotah, who, based in our report, was executed by his captors," Kabalu said.

Dema-ala said Araral sought refuge in a military detachment in Barangay Baka around 11:55 a.m. *Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ROUNDUP

2 workers dead

ARAW-ARAW KAMING NASA PANGANIB!

BAGUIO CITY—Two construction workers were killed on Friday when a section of the land they were leveling off in Barangay Holy Ghost here collapsed and buried them. Rescue workers dug out Fortune Nawalig and a man identified only as Charlie 10 minutes after the 12:30 p.m. incident, but a doctor failed to revive them. SFO1 Randy Ochangon, duty officer of the Office of Civil Defense here, said the victims were working on a section of an undeveloped property at the extension road of Holy Ghost but a portion of the hill they were digging up crumbled.
Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Woman raped, freed

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Four unidentified armed men abducted and sexually abused an 18-year-old woman from Padre Garcia, Batangas, police said on Saturday. Calabarzon police director Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa said the victim was waiting for a ride home in Barangay Manggas at around 1 p.m. when the suspects aboard a red Toyota Vios car (VDE 131) ordered her to join them at gunpoint. Verzosa said the victim was brought to a house in Barangay San Agustin in Tiaong, Quezon where the suspects took turns raping her while pointing a gun at her face. He said a few hours later, the suspects dumped the victim somewhere in Tiaong town. The victim was able to return home and reported the crime to the Padre Garcia police, which immediately launched a manhunt.
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Ex-cop nabbed for drugs

PARANG DI KA NAGING PULIS!

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A former policeman who turned drug peddler was arrested by Rizal policemen inside his house in Binangonan over the weekend, police said on Saturday. The suspect, Arnel Mesa, 42, a former Binangonan policeman, had turned to drug peddling after being dismissed from the service a few years ago, police said. Recovered from Mesa's house were 10 plastic sachets containing shabu (methampethamine hydrochloride), a teabag of marijuana, an unlicensed cal. .22 rifle, several drug paraphernalia and ammunition. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Tornado kills 3

COTABATO CITY—At least three persons died while 66 families were displaced when a powerful tornado struck two Maguindanao towns on Nov. 29, Social Welfare Secretary Ruby Sahali of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said Thursday. Sahali said two persons died in Kabaluntan town, including a minor, while another died in nearby Talitay. The twister destroyed 22 houses. Sahali said social workers in Maguindanao gave relief assistance to the victims. It was the second twister recorded in the province in two weeks. Last week, an old woman died when a tornado struck a remote village in Kabacan, North Cotabato. Kabacan Mayor Luzviminda Tan identified the fatality as Hadja Mato. Tan said the victim died after a coconut tree fell on her.
Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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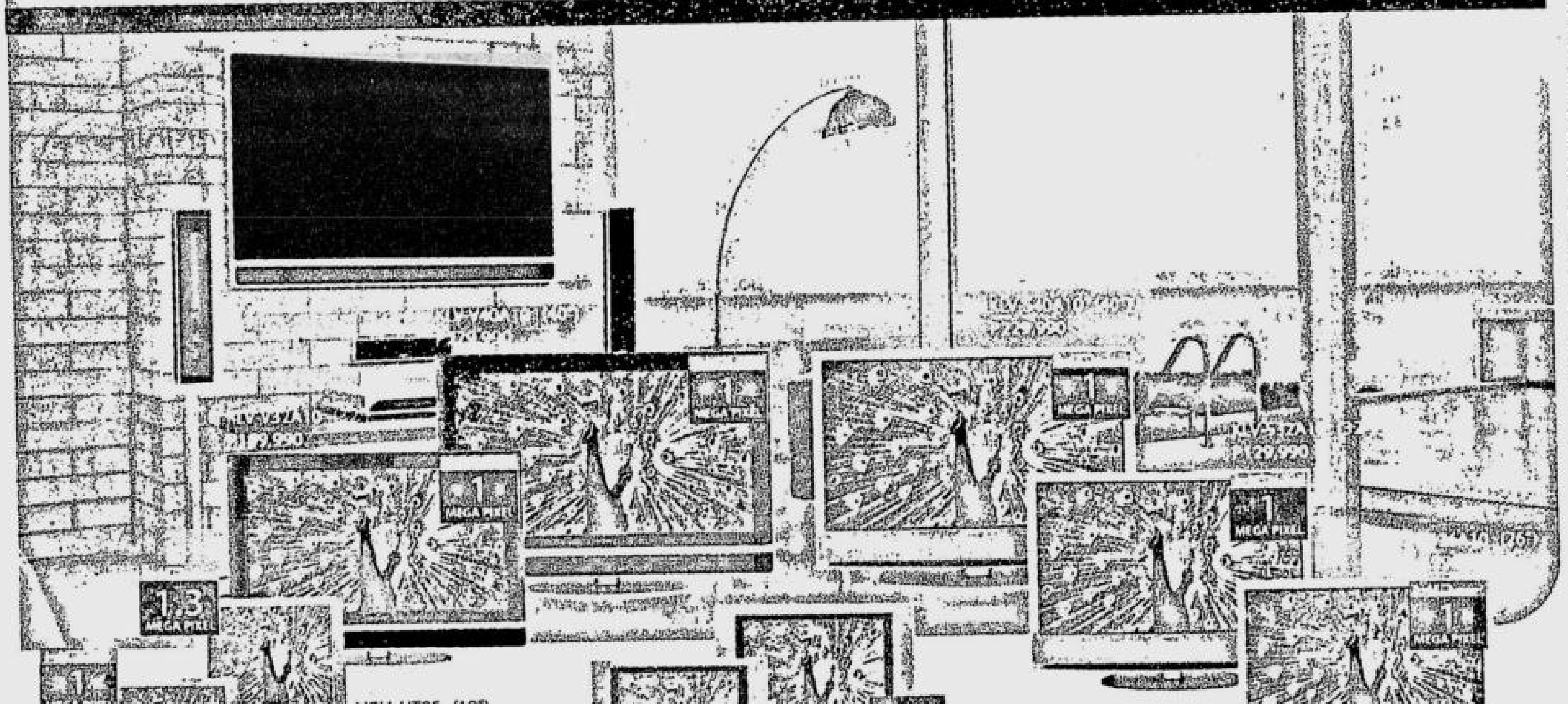

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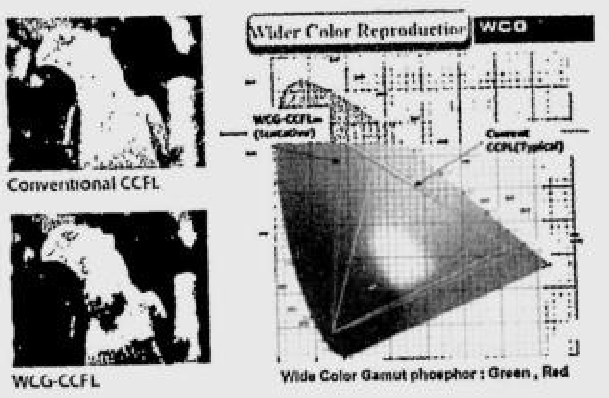

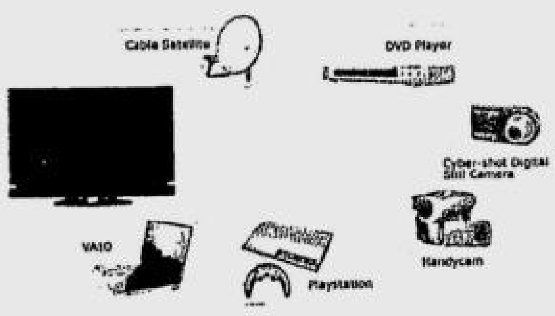

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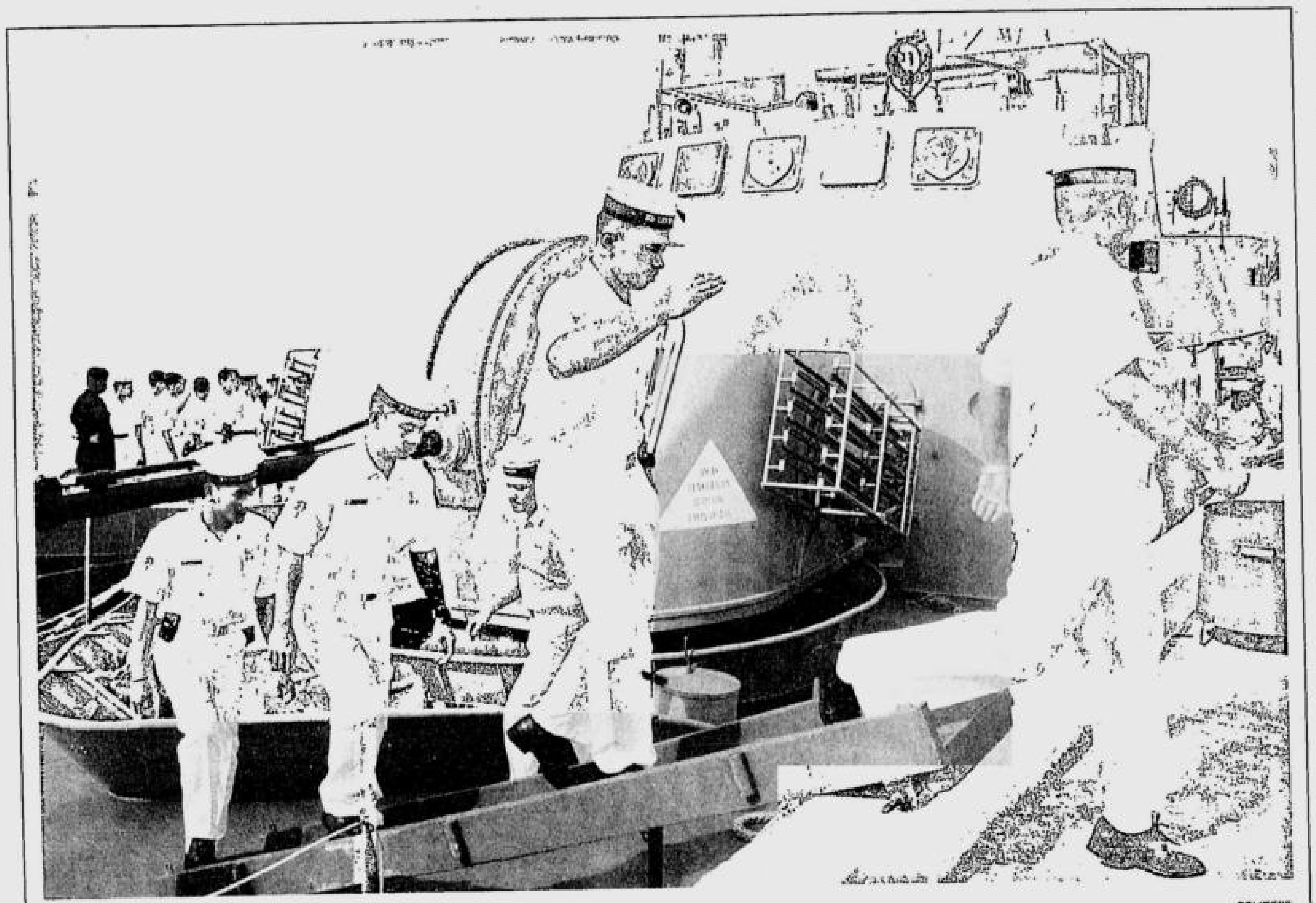


REUTERS

NEIGHBOR'S VISIT
Royal Malaysian Navy sailors disembark from their patrol gunboat after arriving at the port city of Zamboanga Dec. 5, 2005. The Philippines and Malaysian Navy will undertake maritime exercises in Mindanao to enhance their capability in the war against terrorism in the region.

COA, court execs back suspect in molest case

DAGUPAN CITY—HAVING AN 11-year-old daughter sexually molested is a nightmare a mother would never want to experience.

But when influential people started to harass her and her daughter after they sued the suspected molester, the family's woes worsened.

The experiences of the victim and her 35-year-old mother started on Nov. 26 when the latter received a call on her mobile phone.

"[My daughter] was crying and she could not talk at all. Later, somebody who introduced himself as a policeman, asked me to come to the Dagupan police station as something happened to my daughter," the mother said.

The mother, a teacher in Calasiao town, went to the station and learned that her daughter was sexually molested while aboard a jeepney for Dagupan City, where she will get a ride for Mangaldan, her hometown.

The girl said a man (police and court records described him as 29 years old and a resident of San Fabian town) aboard the same jeepney fondled her breasts. The man reportedly concealed the act by covering his arm with a traveling bag.

The girl said she was so scared and she trembled and cried. This caught the attention of fellow passengers, including a policeman, PO1 Gilbert Untalan.

Untalan arrested the man and took him and the girl to a police station.

The girl said the Nov. 26 incident was the second time that she saw the man. She saw the suspect two weeks ago when she boarded a jeepney on her way to Dagupan City.

The girl said during their first encounter, the man asked her name, her home address and her school. Then, the girl said, the man tried to give her a video compact disc with a photograph of a couple having sex.

The girl said she immediately got off the jeep and approached a traffic aide when she saw the man following her.

While the mother and daughter were at the police station on Nov. 26, an official in this city, a Commission on Audit official and a court official arrived to support the suspect. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Korean escapes kidnappers in cop uniforms

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—Six suspected kidnappers clad in police uniforms tried but failed to abduct a Korean business executive near the gate of a posh golf course in Carmona, Cavite on Sunday noon, police said yesterday.

In a report sent to this camp, Senior Supt. Benjardi Mantele, Cavite police director, identified the victim as Moon Pyohong, 50, president of the Best Chemical Plastics Philippines Inc. located in Barangay Maduya, Carmona town.

He said Moon escaped from his abductors who were all armed with high powered firearms and wearing police uniforms.

The report said the victim was on board his Nissan Cefiro car (XKH 771) and was on his way to play golf at the Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Barangay Kabilang Baybay at around 11 a.m. when a Mitsubishi Crosswind (UFA 606) and another van cut him and blocked his way.

Three men wearing police uniforms alighted from one of the vehicles and ordered the victim to disembark from his car.

Thinking that the suspects were real policemen, the victim alighted from his car and tried to find out if he had committed any violation.

But when the victim came out of his car, he was hit with the butt of the rifle of one of the suspects.

Mantele said the suspect then forcibly took the Korean inside their vehicle but the victim fought it out with the suspects and was able to return to his car.

The Korean then drove his car near the main gate of the golf club and sought the help of security guards.

The suspects fled after the commotion caught the attention of several bystanders and motorists in the area.

Mantele said the victim was immediately brought to the Asian Medical Hospital in Alabang, Muntinlupa for treatment after suffering contusions in the head and other parts of the body.

The INQUIRER tried to confirm the incident with Supt. Romeo Aspe, Carmona police chief.

In an apparent bid to cover up the story, Aspe said in a text message that the incident was just a "botched holdup."

He refused to answer calls by reporters.

A police official, who asked not to be identified, told the INQUIRER that Aspe probably wanted to hide the incident after he was berated for his alleged failure to provide security to foreigners working in several companies in Carmona.

Just two months ago, a Taiwanese businessman was abducted also near the gate of Southwoods Subdivision. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Cotabato airport repair backed

COTABATO CITY—Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza confirmed there was an immediate need to rehabilitate the Cotabato airport.

But Dureza took exception to reports that his office had caused the delay in the P40-million project aimed at upgrading the airport.

Dureza, who also heads the Mindanao Economic Development Council (MedCo), said he did not meddle with the affairs of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), the agency that would implement the project.

"I do not know why we are being blamed and accused of getting the money. This is not so," he said.

Dureza said work on the airport was being delayed by the inaction of the DOTC.

"There has been no fund disbursement from the agency up to now in spite of our representation to have it released," he said.

Dureza said the DOTC has failed to put up the counterpart fund for the project, which is being required by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Dureza said he sent several letters to DOTC Manila about the project but there has been no action so far.

The planned closure of the Cotabato airport for repairs alarmed Central Mindanao residents, particularly the business community.

Domingo Duerme, PAL vice president for Mindanao, said the airport could remain open if its runway was cleared of pebbles. *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Iloilo power plant to shut down; city faces outages

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—THIS CITY FACES power outages starting next week after its lone electric supplier announced it would shut down its power plant on Dec. 15 due to continued losses resulting from the lowering of power rates in the city.

The shutting down of the 72-megawatt diesel-fired plant of the Panay Power Corp. (PPC), a subsidiary of Mirant Global Corp., would trigger blackouts unless alternative sources of energy were tapped to supply the Panay Electric Company (Peco).

Peco is the sole power distributor of the city's 180 barangays with around 40,000 consumers.

In a statement, PPC vice president Arman Lapus said their company has been operating on a loss due to underpayments of Peco amounting to P250 million.

He said their current fuel inventory would last only until Dec. 15 because of its inability to pay for its fuel needs due to Peco's underpayments.

The Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) on May 9, 2004 ordered Peco to unbundle its rates and reduce its charges by P2 per kilowatt-hour from around P6 per kwh to P4.

In a ruling dated Sept. 16, the Court of Appeals' Ninth Division upheld the ERC decision and denied Peco's petition to nullify the commission's order.

The reduction of the power rates has resulted in a drop in the monthly electric bills of consumers by at least 30 percent.

Peco is petitioning the ERC to restore its charges before the order for a P2 decrease in charges was implemented.

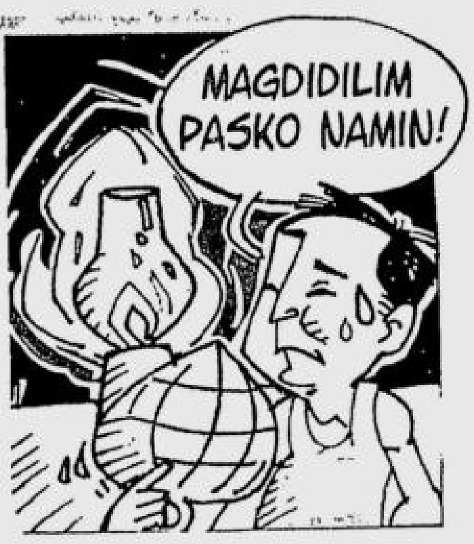
"What (Peco) pays us is not even enough to pay for our fuel cost. We are hoping that an immediate solution will be arrived at, to allow us to provide reliable and efficient electric service for the people of Iloilo City on a sustainable basis," said Lapus.

Consumer and militant groups, however, lambasted PPC and Peco for threatening its consumers with blackouts.

"After milking millions of pesos in profits from its consumers, they now resorts to blackmail," said Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan-Panay) chair Aurelio Bosque.

Bosque urged the national government to ensure the power supply to the public "instead of leaving it to the control of monopolies like PPC, Mirant and Peco."

Lawyer Romeo Gerochi, chair of the Freedom from Debt Coalition- Iloilo, challenged PPC and Peco to show proof that they were indeed losing because of the reduction of Peco's charges.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‘Hard labor’ means no cell phones, no VIP treatment

From page A1

getting special treatment, either.

Despite his pleas, custodians of the retired general have confiscated his two cell phones, leaving him with only an official landline to communicate with the outside world.

And his conversations are being monitored.

“This is just proof to debunk claims of some parties or those who do not believe in us that he isn’t being given special treatment,” Chief Supt. Geary Barias, camp commander, said yesterday.

Smuggled

Sentenced by a court-martial last week to two years of detention at hard labor for undeclared wealth and for holding a US “green card” signifying permanent resident status, Garcia has been held at the Philippine National Police Custodial Center since June this year.

Barias said the phones his men confiscated from Garcia in August had been smuggled in to him.

After the phones were taken from him, Garcia formally asked to be exempted from the rule banning personal phones inside the detention center, but this was denied, Barias said.

Sandiganbayan clearance

Barias clarified the PNP role was simply to provide a detention place for Garcia and not to carry out any punishment ordered by the military court.

“The only job of the PNP as far as General Garcia is keeping him under our custody, that is all,” he said.

The Armed Forces can take custody of Garcia and do whatever it wishes with him, he said.

A military prosecutor earlier explained that officers sentenced to “hard labor” did not actually perform hard work or carry out menial jobs.

The matter of moving Garcia out of Camp Crame, however, must first be clarified with the Sandiganbayan, according to Barias.

Informant inside

If he is ordered transferred elsewhere, there “should be some clarification because (it was) the Sandiganbayan who gave us the order (placing him) under our custody,” Barias said.

Garcia is also being tried at the Sandiganbayan for plunder and perjury.

Barias said that sometime in August, “assets” or informants inside the detention center reported that Garcia was using cell phones—a violation of the rules.

“When we confronted him, he admitted it immediately and surrendered them,” he said.

The Custodial Center does not allow mobile phones for security reasons. To escape may be far from Garcia’s mind, but other inmates could use his phone to plan an escape or cause trouble, officials said.

Peculiar case

The center has a landline that inmates can use in emergency situations or to contact their lawyers.

On Aug. 15, after he was stripped of his phones, Garcia wrote Barias, saying he needed them to talk to his lawyers defending him in numerous cases.

“I understand that this policy should be uniformly applied to all. However, my cases are unlike the others who are being held in the Custodial Center,” Garcia said in his letter, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER.

“My present predicament of having a very substantial number of cases that involves voluminous documents and allegations that I need to confront is distinctly different from all the other cases of [persons] being held in the center,” he said.

Police firm

“Thus, it becomes imperative for me to continuously coordinate with my lawyers through the cellular phone.”

GARCIA requested for exemption

But Barias was firm.

“There is no VIP treatment for Garcia,” Barias told the INQUIRER. “If we do that, other inmates who get regular visitors would surely complain. There is no hiding that,” Barias said.

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*IMS (PADDS), Dec. 2004. **Medical Journal of Diabetes Care Vol. 27, No. 1, Jan 2004 Issue by: Jarl S. Torgerson MD, PHD, et al ***John Foreyt, PH.D, Kristine Napier M.P.H., RD and Louis Aronne, M.D., F.A.C.P. The Xenical Advantage. How to use the remarkable new FDA-Approved drug to lose weight faster and keep it off Safely and Effectively (New York: Simon & Schuster Inc., 1999), 22-23

MESSAGES

My warmest felicitations to the Philippine Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism (PSEM) and the Philippine Diabetes Association (PDA) as you co-organize the 2005 Congress of the Asean Federation of Endocrine Societies (AFES) with the theme "Linking Molecular and Clinical Endocrinology"

I am pleased that the Philippines has been chosen to host this important regional congress. Foreign and local medical professionals will find this event an opportune time for interaction and learn new approaches and methods on the prevention and treatment of endocrine diseases.

With the participation of renowned endocrinologists and physicians specializing in diabetes, I am confident that this gathering will benefit our Filipino doctors and health workers and help them raise the quality and standards of the medical profession. Our people will be the ultimate beneficiary.

The hosting of this event is a confirmation of the Philippines as a major and competitive player in the advancement of medical science in the esteemed circle of the Asean.

More power and Mabuhay kayong lahat!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

My warmest greetings to the officers and members of the ASEAN Federation of Endocrine Societies (AFES) as they host the 2005 Congress of AFES entitled "Linking Molecular and Clinical Endocrinology"

An annual assembly of healthcare professionals is always a significant event that provides a wealth of information that helps advance the knowledge and competence of health care providers.

I commend AFES for its continuing program of enhancing the professional growth of its members through its first-rate lectures that will surely provide additional knowledge to our endocrinologists nationwide.

The Department of Health extends its support to your endeavors and wishes you fruitful results as you continue to improve the Filipino quality of life.

Congratulations and Mabuhay kayong lahat!

FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc.
Secretary of Health

Welcome to Manila!

After several months of immense preparation, the Organizing Committee has come out with a stimulating scientific programme and an excellent social and programme. Hard work, persistence, perseverance, commitment and love for endocrinology were the driving forces that led to the creation of this very important congress in the ASEAN region.

There were enormous challenges but none that we were not able to rise up to. Knowing that there is a dearth of endocrinologists in the region and an increasing prevalence of endocrine disorders - diabetes, obesity, dyslipidemia, metabolic syndrome, osteoporosis and thyroid disorders, this Congress will hopefully inspire and provide a significant impact in the lives of our patients. We believe that this Congress will contribute to the empowerment of the endocrine patients in the region. May the Congress proceedings influence our different health authorities to prioritize endocrine disorders and put prevention of these diseases as important issues in their respective countries.

We look forward to an exciting Congress. We look forward to sharing with you the beauty and myriad activities that Manila has to offer. Enjoy Manila! Enjoy the Philippines!

ROBERTO C. MIRASOL, MD
President, Asean Federation of Endocrine Societies (AFES)

The Philippine Society of Endocrinology and the Philippine Diabetes Association, worked hard together, with the quality of the Congress as the top priority. Our program will empower health care professionals interested in the fields of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism with the latest scientific advances and breakthroughs in basic and clinical research in the fields. Our international, regional and local pool of experts, armed with their vast experiences and unquestionable expertise will unselfishly share their knowledge in this meeting.

Aside from the excellent scientific program, the Organizing Committee has carefully planned three important social events: The Opening Ceremony to formally welcome and honor our delegates and to share with them the fiesta (party) spirit, the AFES Cultural Night at the Coconut Palace which will be a celebration in the unique Filipino way as well as to highlight the presentations by the different member countries-- an AFES tradition that started in Manila 10 years ago, and the Closing Ceremony, that will witness the Ceremonial Turnover of AFES Flag to the next host country of the AFES Congress in 2007.

Enjoy the spirit of the Christmas Holidays in the City of Manila at its most festive! Truly Filipino! WELCOME and MABUHAY!

ROSA ALLYN G. SY, MD
Chair, Organizing Committee

On behalf of the the Philippine Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism and the Philippine Diabetes Association, it is pleasure and honor to welcome you all to the 2005 Congress of the ASEAN Federation of Endocrine Societies (AFES), December 7 to 10, 2005 at the Philippine International Convention Center, Manila, Philippines.

The AFES occurs every two years rotating among the member countries. The last time Manila hosted this congress was 10 years ago in 1995. The 2005 Congress theme is "Linking Clinical and Molecular Endocrinology."

This meeting will be participated by experts from the Asia-Pacific region, Australia, Europe and USA and is expected to attract more than 1500 delegates.

International and Philippine experts are featured in the various plenary and meet the expert sessions, as well as during the industry sponsored symposia. Topics of interest will include diabetes and pregnancy, thyroid cancer, osteoporosis, obesity, lipid disorders and adrenal incidental masses.

There are a total of 145 research papers for presentation in both the oral and poster formats submitted not only from the ASEAN region but from various countries around the world.

I wish you all a most fruitful and enjoyable meeting!

ELIZABETH PAZ-PACHECO, MD
Chair, Scientific Committee

ASEAN FEDERATION OF ENDOCRINE SOCIETIES

CONGRESS OF AFES PHILIPPINES 2005

Organized by:
The Philippine Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism, Inc. (PSEM)
and
The Philippine Diabetes Association, Inc. (PDA)

December 7-10 • Philippine International Convention Center

Theme: LINKING MOLECULAR AND CLINICAL ENDOCRINOLOGY

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

DAY 1 • DECEMBER 7 (WEDNESDAY)

Pre-Congress Symposia

1. Clinical Implications of Pre-mixed and Basal Analogues Routine Practice
   (Mindanao Ballroom, Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel)
2. Strategies to Achieving Target Glycemic Control
   (Harbor Pavilion, Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel)

Opening Ceremonies *(Harbor Pavilion, Westin Philippines Plaza Hotel)*
Lecture: AFES: Quo Vadis?
- Dr. Augusto D. Litonjua, MD

DAY 2 • DECEMBER 8 (THURSDAY)

Plenary Lectures (Reception Hall, PICC)

- Advances in Thyroid Cancer Diagnosis and Management
  - Dr. Paul W. Ladenson (USA)
- Anti-Resorptives, Bone-Forming Agents and Bone Remodeling in Osteoporosis
  - Dr. Mary Anne Lim-Abrahan (Philipines)

Clinical Update Symposia *(Meeting Rooms, PICC)*

Symposium 1: Genetics of Endocrine Diseases
- Application of Genetics to Endocrinology
- Mitochondrial Genetic Factors in Diabetes Mellitus
- Thyroid Cancer: Genetics and Gene Therapy

Symposium 2: Metabolic Syndrome in the ASEAN Region
- Metabolic Syndrome among Filipinos 20 Years Old and Above in 2003-2004 in the Philippines
- Metabolic Syndrome among Filipinos Living in San Diego, California
- Metabolic Syndrome among Filipinos living in Hawaii
- Asian definitions of Metabolic Syndrome: How do they alter the associated risk of Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes Mellitus
- Metabolic Syndrome: Malaysian Perspective
- Metabolic Syndrome in Thai Population

Symposium 3: Novel Endocrine Organs / Tissues
- Regulation of Proinsulin Biosynthesis: A key factor in the Pathogenesis of Type 2 Diabetes
- Mechanism of Obesity-Induced Insulin Resistance
- From Bench to Clinic: The potential role of IGF binding proteins in clinical medicine

Meet-the-Expert Sessions *(Meeting Rooms, PICC)*
Session 1: Challenging Cases of Thyroid Cancer
Session 2: Adrenal Case Discussions
Session 3: Hypothalmo-Pituitary Diseases
Session 4: Diabetes and Pregnancy

DAY 3 • DECEMBER 9 (FRIDAY)

Plenary Lectures (Reception Hall, PICC)

- Modern Management of Diabetes and Pregnancy
  - Dr. Lois Jovanovic (USA)
- The Gut and the Adipose Tissue as Regulatory Endocrine Tissues
  - Dr. F. Xavier Pi-Sunyer (USA)

Clinical Update Symposia *(Meeting Rooms, PICC)*

Symposium 4: Intersex Disorders and Reproductive Endocrinology
- Treatment of Male Hypogonadism
- Infertility

Symposium 5: Obesity
- Recent Advances in the Genetics of Obesity
- Obesity in Childhood
- Glycemic Index of Thai Foods and the Role on Weight Reduction

Symposium 6: Thyroid
- Autoimmune Graves' Ophthalmopathy
- Iodine Deficiency
- Laparoscopic Thyroidectomy

AFES Young Investigators' Award
Oral Presentation
AFES Cultural Night

DAY 4 • DECEMBER 10 (SATURDAY)

Plenary Lectures (Reception Hall, PICC)

- Adrenal Incidentalomas: Diagnostic Strategies
  - Dr. William F. Young, Jr. (USA)
- FIELD Study: A Large Scale Trial of Fibrates Therapy in Diabetes
  - Prof. Philip Barter (Australia)
  - Prof. Anthony Keech (Australia)
  - Prof. Alberto Zambon (Italy)
- The Diabetic Heart
  - Dr. David S.H. Bell (USA)

Clinical Update Symposia *(Meeting Rooms, PICC)*

Symposium 7. Calcium and Bone
- Glucocorticoid-Induced Osteoporosis
- Osteomalacia
- Hypophosphatemic Rickets

Symposium 8: Cardiovascular Endocrinology
- Dyslipidemia: Linking Molecular to Clinical Practice
- Glycemic Control in Cardiovascular Complications of Diabetes
- Interheart: Asia Pacific Perspective

Symposium 9: Diabetes
- Approaches to the Problem of Multiple Risk Factor Intervention in Type 2 Diabetes
- Using PPAR alpha and PPAR gamma in the Treatment of Obese and Diabetic Patients

Closing Ceremonies *(Reception Hall, PICC)*

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Defensor confirms report: No more logging in Samar

From page A1

SJTC is owned by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile.

SJTC counsel Napoleon Poblador earlier said that Defensor may have been misquoted.

"There's no legal move by the [opponents] to question the lifting of the moratorium. How can the DENR make a pronouncement like that?" he said.

At a news conference where he announced the cancellation of 276 forest management agreements covering 3 million hectares, Defensor said Borongan Bishop Leonardo Medroso was not misquoted when he told reporters about the secretary's commitment.

"We were able to discuss matters and the understanding is very clear," Defensor said of his two-hour meeting with six Catholic bishops on Dec. 2.

"I've already told the bishops that I will no longer give any statement on the matter... You may ask the bishops about my commitments," he said.

After the meeting with Defensor, Medroso announced that the environment secretary had assured the bishops that SJTC would not resume operations in Samar.

In exchange, the bishops of Samar, Leyte and Biliran called off an antilogging and antimining caravan rally scheduled for Dec. 5, and their plan to collect 200,000 signatures for a petition urging President Macapagal-Arroyo to cancel SJTC's logging permit.

Nature park

The Church, environmental groups and the provincial governments on Samar Island have opposed the DENR decision to uphold on Aug. 16 the timber license agreement (TLA) of SJTC in a 95,770-ha area inside the 330,000-ha Samar Island Nature Park.

They claimed that Defensor upheld SJTC's TLA as a quid pro quo for his confirmation in June by the Commission on Appointments. Enrile is a member of the CA.

Asked if SJTC's TLA was among the 276 forest management agreements cancelled by the DENR, Defensor told the INQUIRER that the company's Samar concession was not among those studied and found to have been abused.

"San Jose is out of the picture because these integrated forest management agreements (Ifma) and community-based management agreements (CBFMAs) were already operational," Defensor said.

Moratorium

The DENR stopped SJTC's operations in 1989 as part of a logging moratorium in Samar to pave the way for an inventory of the island's remaining forests. The moratorium was not lifted by subsequent environment secretaries, who worked for the proclamation of a large part of the island as a forest reserve in 1996 and as a nature park in 2003.

Defensor said the study of the forest management agreements started in February.

"The Ifmas were cancelled because of violations of the terms and conditions of the agreements. The CBFMA's were cancelled because of the unsatisfactory performance (of their holders)," Defensor said.

Ifmas are given to qualified entities and usually cover at least 5,000 ha. CBFMA's are entered into with communities in the forests reserves and usually cover less than 5,000 ha.

Fronts for illegal loggers

"We've found out that some of these CBFMA's are already being used as fronts for operations of illegal loggers (under the guise of people's organizations acting for the communities)," Defensor said.

For their part, unscrupulous Ifma holders continue to cut trees while not doing their share of planting, according to Defensor.

He said it was quite difficult to monitor illegal operations because the DENR lacked manpower.

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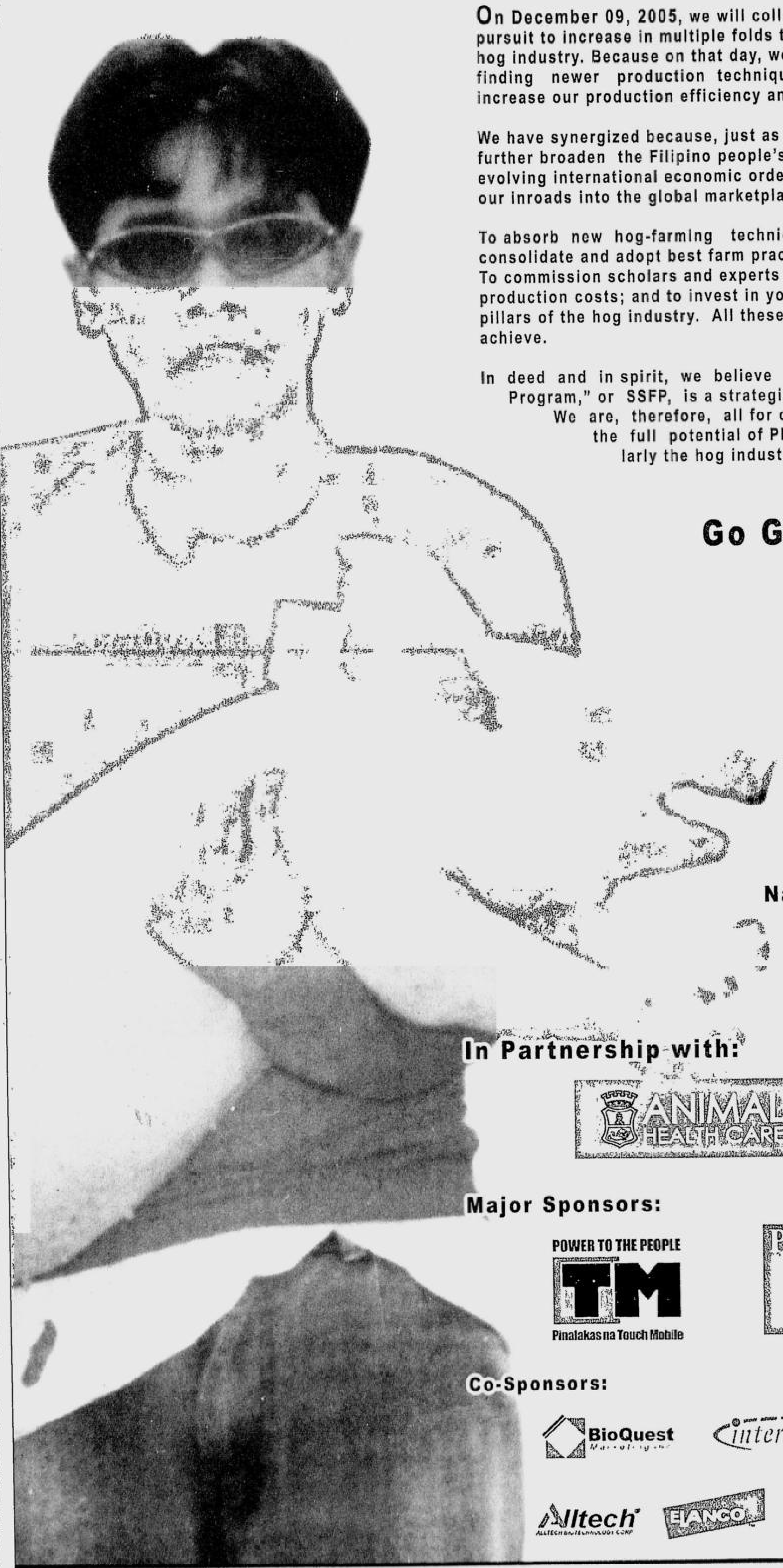
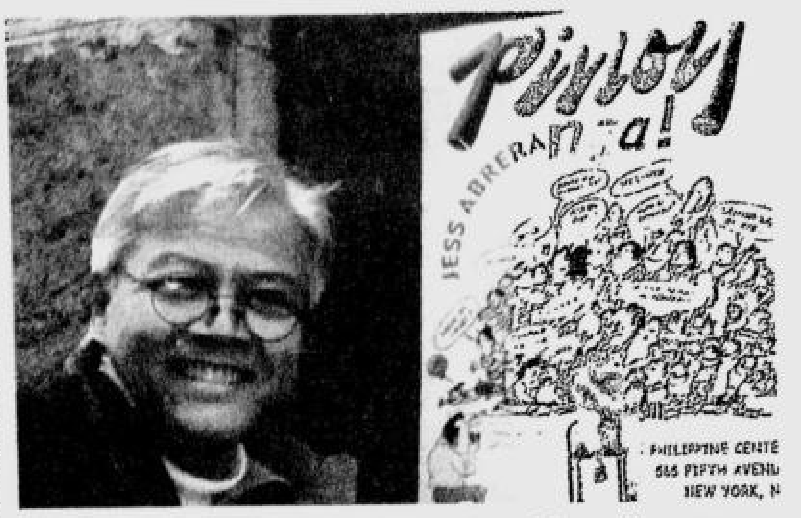


Carabao creator remains giddy kid at heart

UNVEILED: Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, INQUIRER president/CEO with 20 carabaos made of fiberglass sculpted by Sajid Imao and interpreted by leading artists upon the PDI's 20th anniversary theme, "The Power of Knowing." RUDY ESPERAS

From page A1

he helps us produce rice, which is something so important to us. I would point him out to my playmates and cousins, and I would say, 'That's my carabao.'"



ARTIST ABRERA, unlike his iconic creation, neither wallows nor rests on his laurels but now teaches art for free to the children of displaced city dwellers in Antipolo and Taguig.

Many years later, the ingrained affection would take delightful form in Kalabaw, the wry bovine sidekick of farmer Alipio A. Lipin in Abrera's satirical comic strip, A. Lipin, which debuted in the Philippine Daily Inquirer when the newspaper was founded in 1985, during the last days of the Marcos regime.

On Oct. 24-Nov. 4, Kalabaw, now known as Guyito, the official mascot of the newspaper, rubbed hooves with other Abrera characters and the cosmopolitan crowd at the Philippine Center in New York, where the cartoonist exhibited over 30 colored illustrations from his "Pinoy Nga" series, upon invitation of the Philippine consulate.

Kid in the big city

It was Abrera's first trip to New York—"with help from the INQUIRER, which sponsored my trip," he hurriedly adds—and he felt like a kid in the big city.

"It was also nice to see all the Pinoys passing by, seeing the exhibit and laughing," he says. "They could relate to everything they saw."

For example, one of Abrera's cartoons featured the typical All Saints Day family reunion, with a buffet spread right on top of the loved one's tomb.

Abrera recounts that US-based Filipinos came up to him and made suggestions—like, why not put a mahjong set, too? They talked about their own experiences, and shared them with their US-born grandchildren and nephews asking about the customs in the motherland.

"The drawings became conversation pieces, the connecting line between old and new Filipinos," Abrera says. "They were able to remember the life they knew before, which they really miss. We were so creative when we were younger."

Student of the world

The carabao is a fitting alter ego for its creator, the impish artist who remains a diligent student of the world around him.

Born in Manila, Jesus Abrera Jr. is the second of the five children of Jesus Abrera Sr., who used to work with the Philippines Herald, and Soledad Pabico, a dressmaker from whom, Abrera believes, he inherited his artistic bent.

Even as a child, he drew prodigiously, and because paper was expensive, he ended up filling the walls of their rented apartment with doodles.

His parents' fears that the landlady would be livid were unfounded; the woman actually liked what the boy had done.

"It was my first taste of public appreciation," Abrera says, grinning.

Not wanting to be anything but an artist, Abrera took up fine arts (major in advertising) at the University of the Philippines, where he immediately joined the social realists.

His contemporaries in the Kaisahan Group included the likes of SR stalwarts Pablo Baens Santos and Egai Fernandez.

"Our work would depict what was happening, and what was happening was depressing—we couldn't paint anything beautiful," Abrera says.

Thus, his canvases were filled with scenes of poverty, pollution, socialist dreams, and the dark, earthy colors of civil unrest.

'Koboy' Eggie

Abrera never got to graduate with the batch of 1967, having found odd jobs and failed to finish his electives. In 1978, he applied as an illustrator at Mr. and Ms. magazine, meeting for the first time publisher and INQUIRER founder Eugenia "Eggie" Apostol.

"I found her really *koboy* (cool)," he recalls. "She was so easy to talk to, no OA. If you were ready to work, game, no more questions asked."

Abrera managed to marry his penchant for cartoons and political commentary, doing illustrations for such outspoken columnists as S.P. Lopez and Fr. Joaquin Bernas.

By 1985, with the establishment of the INQUIRER, head cartoonist Abrera began his cartoon strips as *"panakip butas"* (filler) when there was empty column space.

If there were no important personalities to caricature, Kalabaw made an appearance, making comments on the day's events.

Before he knew it, Abrera's carabao had shared billing—and held snide conversations—with a gallery of political figures and five presidents, from Marcos to GMA.

"You really don't plan the comic strip, but it's the scripts that take time to think up," Abrera confesses.

He gets his ideas sitting in jeepneys to and from his home in Antipolo—he refuses to drive outside of his mountain domicile—and taking long walks in Sta. Cruz and other places in downtown Manila.

The observations have apparently struck a chord: His 2001 compilation, "The Best of A. Lipin: Cartoon Strips, 1985-2000," won the Manila Critics Circle National Book Award.

Sharing the talent

Today, the 60-year-old Abrera still lives in Antipolo with his wife of 25 years, Bernadette, and their three children—Manuel, 23, who works on documentary films; Miguel, 18, a student of anthropology at the Ateneo; and Isa, 12, who, he swears, is definitely "an artist."

"I think all children start out as artists, but they lose it when they get older," he says. "But when they see a parent doing it all the time, they pursue it."

Nowadays, Abrera is also doing community work and teaching free art—everything from drawing to *papier maché*—to the children of displaced city dwellers in Antipolo and Taguig.

"Tapos na din ako sa bayad-bayad lang (I'm done with just doing paying work)," he declares. "This is something I do for the fulfillment, and it makes me really happy. What else is an artist's talent for if you don't share it?"

He works every day in his Antipolo studio, and hopes to complete enough paintings soon for a solo exhibit. "I still like to paint what's around me. How can you paint any other subject except what you know and what you experience?" he says.

Abrera remembers again the wistful smiles of the Filipinos who came to see his work in New York: "These people have so much in terms of material things, but they're just walking and working. They don't dream anymore. I don't envy them, really. We Pinoys here in our country are lucky, because we still have so many dreams."

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Man who sold stolen car charged

By DJ Yap

THE POLICE YESTERDAY FILED charges against a man who allegedly tried to sell a stolen Mercedes Benz during a buy-bust operation in a Quezon City subdivision on Nov. 17.

The suspect, Maurice Valenton, was charged with car theft and violation of the antifencing law by the Traffic Management Group (TMG) of the Philippine National Police in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office.

Also charged was Danilo Ang, under whose name the car was registered in the Land Transportation Office, and two more unidentified suspects.

Valenton was arrested on Nov. 17 after he tried to sell the luxury car that was later discovered to had been taken at gunpoint from Manuel Batucan on Pearl Drive in Ortigas Center, Pasig City on Oct. 24, police said.

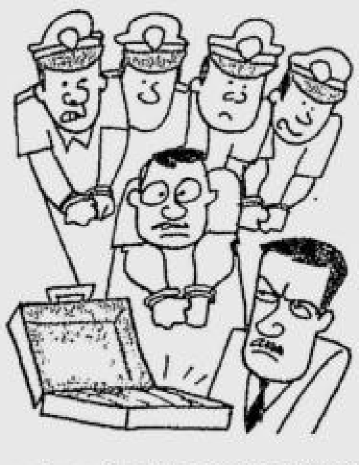
Batucan identified the man who took the car as Brian Dulay, one of three suspected carjackers killed during the controversial Ortigas shootout with TMG operatives on Nov. 7.

Police investigation showed that the Benz's chassis and motor numbers had been tampered with. The car's license plate had also been changed to WTS 977 from the original XDJ 282.

Valenton was arrested with Patrick Tuzon whoallegedly tried to sell a Nissan Patrol which had been taken at gunpoint from the driver of TV host Iya Villania. Four other hot cars were recovered during the operation in Vista Real Subdivision, Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City.

4 cops, ex-lawman nabbed for extortion

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.



FOUR POLICEMEN AND A RETIRED police official have been arrested for allegedly extorting P400,000 from a businessman in Antipolo City.

Antipolo City Police chief Supt. Primitivo Tabujara identified the policemen as PO3 Simeon Salazar, PO2 Eulogio Catallo Jr., PO1 Ray Apuya, PO1 Enrique Assaud and retired Insp. Jesus de Guzman.

They were arrested on Monday afternoon after businessman Felix Sotto Jr., 46, sought the help of the police.

According to Sotto, the suspects, armed with a search warrant, raided his house in Barangay Dela Paz on Nov. 25 and seized fake sticker labels for video compact discs.

But instead of filing charges, the suspects allegedly demanded P400,000 in exchange for dropping the case against him.

Sotto initially gave P80,000 and promised to pay the balance of P320,000 on Dec. 5. To ensure that he would come up with the money, the suspects also took his Toyota Revo.

The trader went to the police which set up an entrapment in Sotto's house at 1:15 p.m. Monday. When the suspects received the money from the trader, they were promptly arrested.

The suspects are now in the custody of the city police.

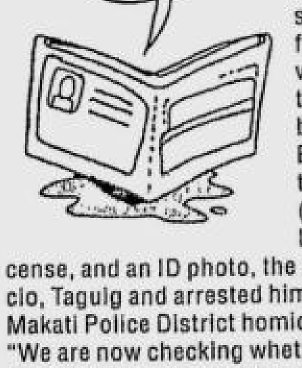
METROBRIEFS

Suspected swindlers fall

BEWARE of shady schemes disguised as business opportunities. The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) issued this warning yesterday with the arrest of an alleged con man and his wife who reportedly duped a businesswoman of P3.1 million through an elaborate scheme involving other syndicate members. Suspects Danilo and Ana Estrada were brought to the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office for inquest, according to NBI Special Task Force (STF) chief Regional Director Reynaldo Esmeralda. The couple's alleged cohorts, a certain Mr. Santos and Mr. Marquez, Eduardo Decena, Danilo Liwag, Edwin Atutubo, Arman Anievas, an alias Koji Hapon, and five others, remain at large. According to the NBI STF investigation report, the victim, Elizabeth Palad, filed a complaint for syndicated estafa before the bureau last Nov. 23 after the suspects made off with millions of her money. The report said the syndicate members had divided themselves into two groups and approached Palad separately to inquire about the warehouse she was selling. The victim said the groups later urged her to get involved in their businesses, promising her huge profits. When one group asked her for a P3.1 million loan to pay off debts, she agreed. But when she tried to collect her money, the suspects failed to return the loan.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Almost a clean getaway



TWO ARMY men were arrested yesterday for their suspected involvement in the death of a taxi driver in Makati City Monday night. Pfc. Richard Bryan Escanda and Pfc. Randy Avenido of the 191st Military Police Battalion would have gotten away had the former not left his wallet behind in the back seat of Roberto Yabut's taxi. Yabut, 57, was found dead inside his cab which was awkwardly parked on the northbound side of the Buendia flyover in Makati City. He had been shot once in the head. After finding Escanda's wallet which contained his military identification card, an AFPSLAI (Armed Forces and Police Savings and Loan Association Inc.) card, driver's license, and an ID photo, the police went to his quarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig and arrested him. Avenido surrendered hours later, said Makati Police District homicide unit chief, Senior Insp. Gary Reyes. "We are now checking whether any of the driver's belongings was lost, indicating a case of robbery with homicide. If there's none, then it's a case of homicide. But we are still establishing the motive behind the killing," said Reyes.

Tarra V. Quismundo

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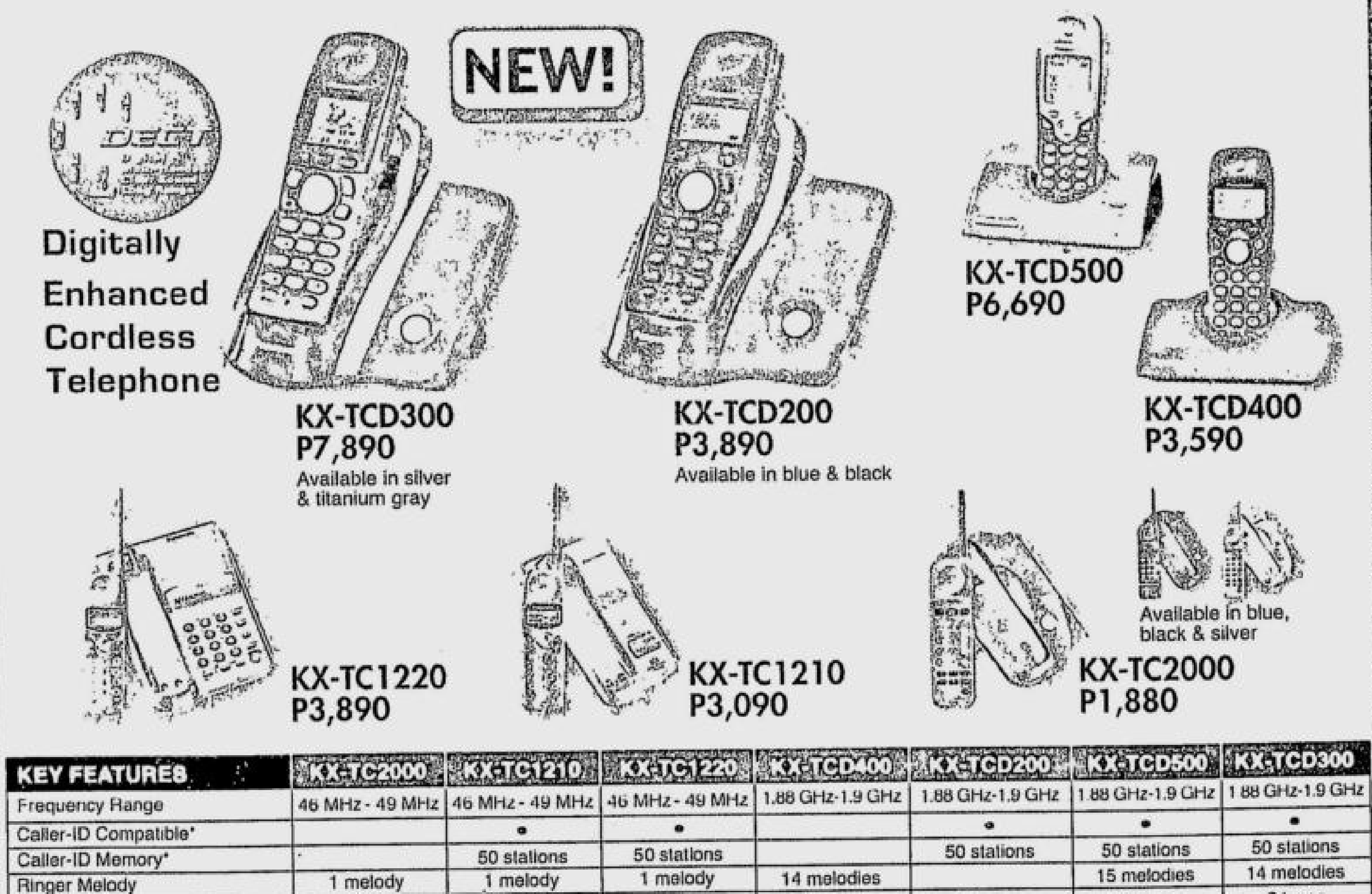

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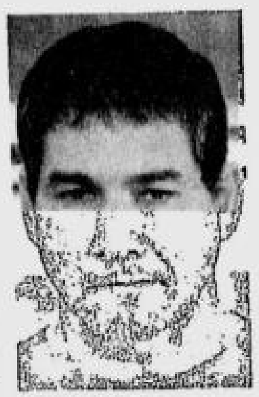
'Roldan wanted to kill boy'

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

FORMER CONGRESSMAN and actor Dennis Roldan ordered at one point the killing of a 3-year-old boy whose kidnapping he had allegedly orchestrated, five days before the victim was rescued, a suspect who turned state witness told the court yesterday.


ROLDAN

But Alberto Pagdanganan, who was Roldan's alleged right hand during the kidnapping, said he refused to kill the boy.

WANG

Roldan and six others are accused of kidnapping a Filipino-Chinese boy on Feb. 9 in Pasig City. They allegedly asked for more than P250 million in ransom at the start of negotiations. Roldan, whose real name is Mitchell Gumabao, has denied the charges.

In his testimony yesterday, Pagdanganan said Roldan even personally negotiated with the boy's mother through a phone call on Feb. 18. The actor also reportedly threatened to torture the boy by pricking his penis if she did not give in to his demand, he added.

The ninth witness of the prosecution, Pagdanganan detailed before the court how Roldan and his alleged girlfriend Suzette Wang allegedly recruited him exactly a month before the kidnapping. Wang remains at large.

Pagdanganan said Roldan and Wang initially promised him a P15-million share in the ransom. He said Roldan also gave him P225,000 for the operation, adding that he used part of the money to rent two houses in Quezon City where the group brought the boy.

Pagdanganan also admitted he had asked the others accused in the case—Romeo Orcajada, Adrian Domingo, Noel San Andres and his wife Rowena—who were all his employees, to join the operation. The witness said he started having second thoughts and even offered to return P150, 000 of his own money to Roldan. He said he also heard the actor call up the boy's school on Feb. 8 to confirm if there would be classes the following day, which coincided with the Chinese New Year. The group carried out the kidnapping the next day.

Pagdanganan also told the court he met with Roldan, Wang and Octavio Garces several times in a restaurant reportedly owned by Roldan to plan the kidnapping. His statements corroborated earlier testimonies of policemen who conducted surveillance operations on the group and saw the four in the restaurant.

Pagdanganan also admitted to have arranged the transfer of the boy to at least three safe houses, on Roldan's orders. Two days after the transfer, the state witness allegedly received a phone call from Roldan ordering him to kill the boy.

Pagdanganan refused and phoned Garces, who advised him not to follow Roldan. Garces is also set to testify against the actor and Wang.

Roldan's lawyer Siegfrid Fortun tried to shatter Pagdanganan's credibility, introducing information about pending cases against the state witness.

But Pasig City Regional Trial Court Judge Agnes Carpio said only court convictions could be brought up against a witness to establish his character.

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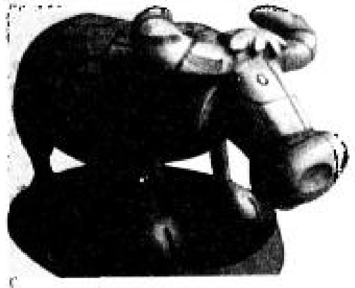

SALVADOR CONVOCAR

BLOW-BY-BLOW ACCOUNT

Sports fans get closer to the action

A HURRIEDLY FORMED TEAM that would immediately figure in major championships.

That, in a nutshell, tells the power-packed evolution of the Philippine Daily Inquirer sports section.

Looking back, the section, born in a snap with the first issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer on Dec. 9, 1985, has never missed a beat in its triumphant mission to chronicle significant events both in the world and national sports fields.

In fact, the first PDI sports headline blares "Navyman triumphs." In that story, J.R. Alibutud reports that "unheralded, Wilfredo Ballester, trailing all the way, swept past a fading Allan Pico with less than three kilometers left to bag the 13th Milo Marathon at the Cultural Center."

It was a Monday, with the section also carrying the Associated Press story on Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej lighting the flame of the 13th Southeast Asian Games.

From one SEA Games to another.

It's no plain coincidence that the PDI sports section marks its 20th birth with the country still in thrill over the 23rd SEA Games which the Philippines has just finished hosting.

For the first time since the country joined the biennial SEAG in Kuala Lumpur in 1977, the Philippines nailed the overall championship, cornering 113 gold, 76 silver and 85 bronze medals.

FROM left: Francis Ochoa, Marc Reyes, Roy Luarca, Musong Castillo, Jasmine Payo, Sports editor Teddyvic Melendres, Sports Features editor Ernie Gonzales, June Navarro

Born in the heat of a regional sports competitions during the Bangkok SEAG, with precision and punctuality a must for reporters and editors, PDI Sports has remained in the thick of the action.

The first listed PDI sports section editor was Ignacio Dee, who called the shots for months, before veteran sports journalist Manolo Iñigo took over the helm.

Iñigo, after a long, distinguished stint, retired and the sports editorship was passed on to Al S. Mendoza, multi-awarded poet and short story writer. Himself a resourceful columnist, Mendoza endowed the section with renewed vigor.

In fact, it was Mendoza's unblinking commitment to his craft and calling which fully exposed age cheating in the World Little League Baseball championships, thereby ending with the Philippines' 1992 world champion team from Zamboanga returning the championship trophy.

Team triumphs and individual heroics. But the section also stood out with a series of exposes, like the overpriced renovation of the Ninoy Aquino Stadium in 1986, an anomaly that involved sports officials who were later charged in court.

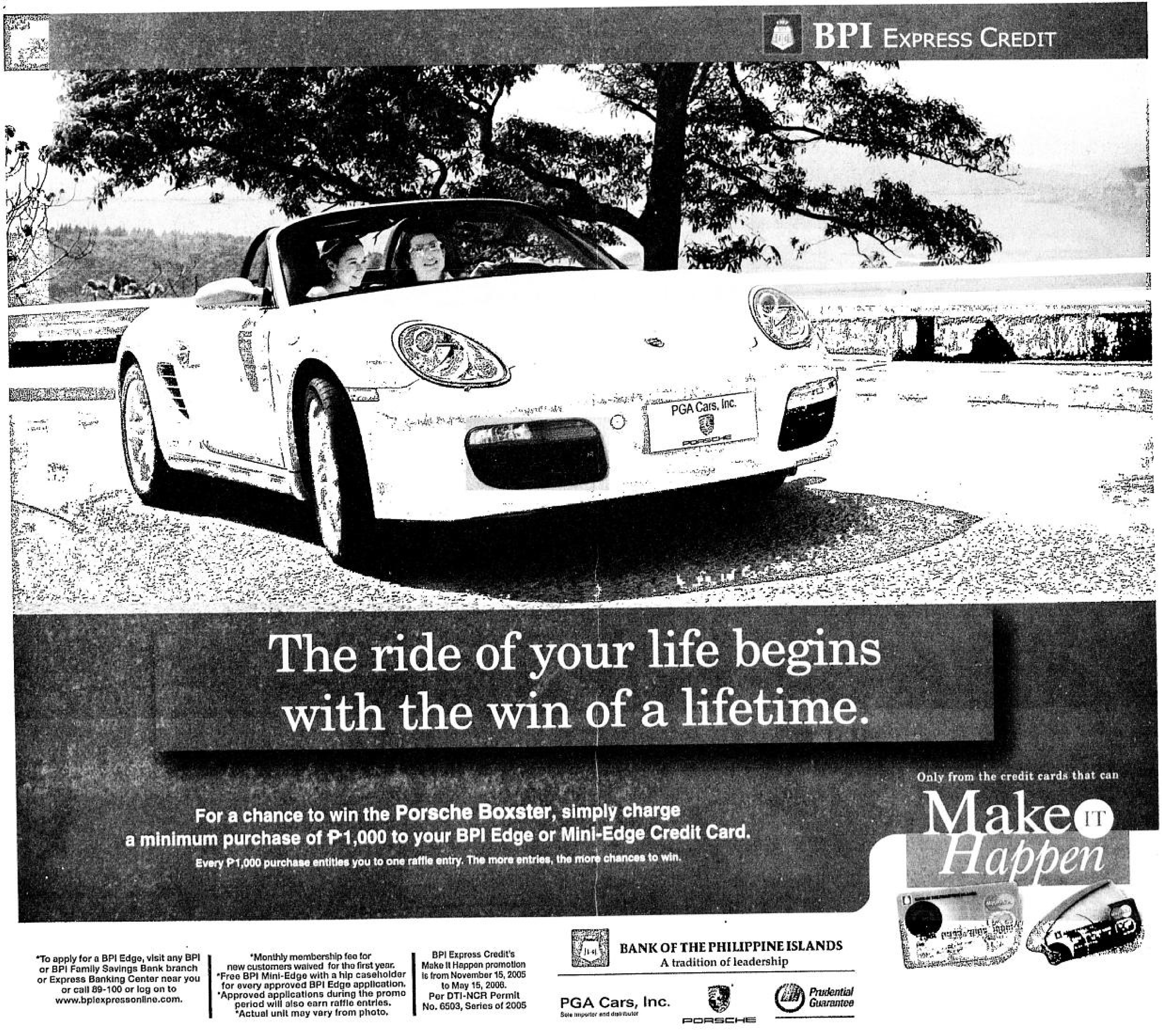
The sex scandal involving a top Filipino swimming official, who was found to have molested a young volunteer at the back of an official car during the Chiang Mai SEA Games in 1994, did not escape the prying eyes of PDI Sports. The official had to eventually relinquish his post.

Basketball has remained main fare, with the PBA providing the biggest arena. But, while basketball action hogged the spotlight, unsavory happenings in the local pro league, like the drug scandal in the pros and the case of the so-called Fil-Shams, were similarly brought out in the open.

In October 1986, a couple of months before it turned a year old, PDI Sports joined the nation in celebrating Lydia de Vega's victory in the Asian Games.

As reported, the 23-year-old De Vega won the gold in the Asian Games 100-meter finals (11.53

SPORTS/ A27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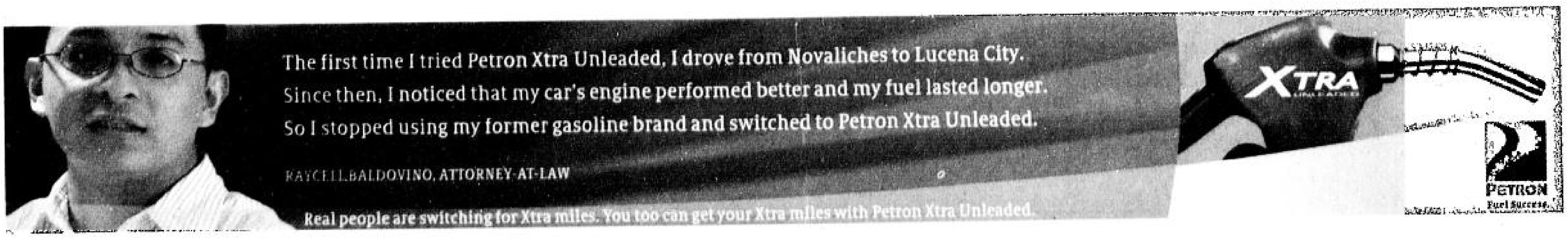
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Giants aim to keep momentum vs Pals

PUREFOODS COACH RYAN GREGORIO IS UNeasy—the long rest may have made his team rusty.

With the Chunkee Giants on top of the leaderboard, Gregorio hopes momentum is still on their side after the All-Star break as they resume their campaign in the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference tonight.

The Giants lead the double-round qualification phase with a 9-win, 3-loss mark, capping that remarkable run with a 78-69 victory over the Alaska Aces before the All-Star break.

"I hope we could pick up where we left off," said Gregorio on the eve of their match against the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals. "I'm pleased that the players have managed to maintain their focus. I hope we can keep the momentum."

For Talk 'N Text coach Joel Banal, the two-week lull could be the break they need to get back into the groove.

The Purefoods Chunkee-Talk 'N Text rematch is set at 7:25 p.m. following the 4:40 encounter between the Sta. Lucia Realtors and the Aces at the Ynares Center.

In their first meeting last month, the Phone Pals bested the Giants, 96-82, to take the early lead. But things have changed of late with the Phone Pals losing their last three games.

Sta. Lucia has also intensified its drive in the tournament by bringing in Damian Owens, who helped the Realtors win their only PBA title—the Governors' Cup in 2001.

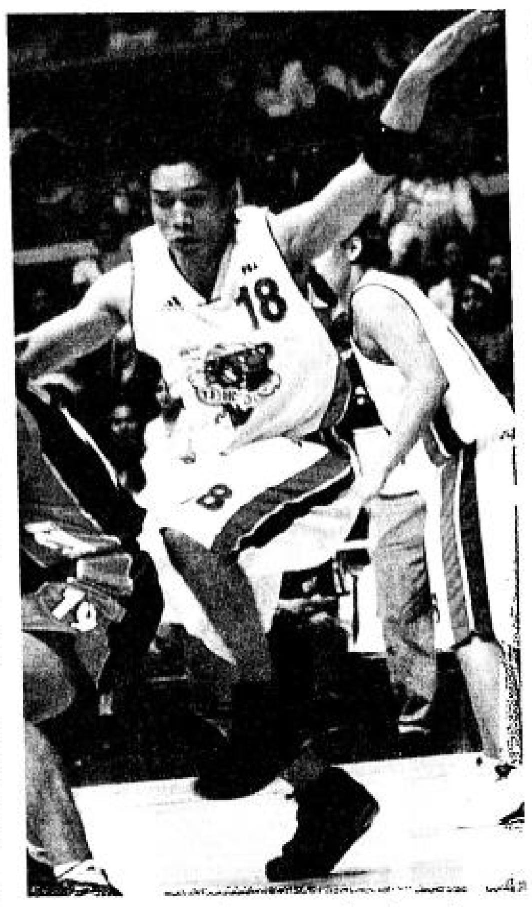
Owens, who was measured at 6-4 15/16 yesterday, will be making his debut against the Aces this afternoon. He replaced Omar Weaver.

The Aces defeated the Realtors in their encounter, 80-75, but will be coming into today's match reeling from a five-game losing spell and parading an all-Filipino crew with the departure of Tee McClary.

Alaska had hoped to replaced McClary with Victor Thomas, but the latter was measured at 6-6 9/16—way over the required 6-foot-5 height ceiling.

STANDINGS	W	L
Purefoods	9	3
Ginebra	7	5
Talk 'N Text	6	5
Red Bull	7	6
Air21	6	6
Coca-Cola	5	6
Sta. Lucia	5	7
Alaska	5	7
San Miguel	3	8

GAMES TODAY
(Ynares Center)
4:40 p.m.—Sta. Lucia Realty vs Alaska
7:25 p.m.—Purefoods vs Talk 'N Text



JAMES Yap is again expected to play a key role in Purefoods' offense. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

San Mig back in the groove

ILOILO CITY—SAN MIGUEL BEER, SHOWING no ill effects from a two-week break, brought down Red Bull, 83-77, at the University of San Agustin gym here Sunday, serving notice that they're still in the hunt in the San Mig Coffee PBA Fiesta Conference.

Kwan Johnson had 18 points to lead San Miguel, which posted its first back-to-back wins in the conference. The Beermen, however, still bring up the rear with their 3-8 card.

But it was Nic Belasco who shone the brightest among coach Jong Uichico's charges. Belasco led a big second quarter breakaway and finished the game with 15 points, 16 rebounds, four assists, two steals and one block.

From a tight 23-21 count after the first quarter, Belasco and Chris Calaguio combined to put the Beermen safely ahead, 43-29.

The scores:

SMB 83—Johnson 18, Peña 15, Belasco 15, Ildefonso 10, Calaguio 8, Racela 6, Seigle 6, Hontiveros 5, Villoria 0, Lopez 0.

RED BULL 77—Greer 27, Valenzuela 15, Pennisi 12, Villanueva 7, Tugade 5, Bugia 4, Fonacier 3, Ybañez 2, Torion 2, Robinson 0, Najorda 0, Bagulo 0, Cruz 0.

Quarters: 23-21, 43-29, 68-49, 83-77

Dream Game on a dream date

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

DON'T JUMP UP, PROTEST, AND INSIST Philippine sports can't score big without basketball.

RP sports can. It did.

Look around, if you haven't seen it yet.

No need to brag and shout out, for everybody to hear, that sports here could go on outside the basketball court.

The success scored by our athletes in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games said it all: sports-loving *Pinoys* are ready and willing to embrace disciplines other than basketball, blindly adored through the years, although not truly fit for the Filipino physique.

The game of basketball, indeed, suffered a cold-blooded knockout, caused by the sensational stand of Filipino athletes in the SEA Games.

It was hard to believe basketball could be junked as the premier game in the land, if just for 10 days.

The change of scenario came like a miracle

* * *

Ok. There's reason to cheer.

But don't count out basketball for good yet.

Tomorrow, Bobong Velez and friends return to the Cubao Big Dome, mecca of RP caging, in a bid to promptly restore love for basketball hereabouts.

Call it wrong timing, a case of miscasting. But two big bunches of cage heroes, from Ateneo and La Salle, rival schools with proud traditions on the hardcourt, claw at each other in what's billed as a dream encounter.

As stated in a press release: "La Salle and Ateneo, the country's most celebrated schools, give a new perspective to their storied rivalry when their best players clash in 'Ateneo-La Salle Dream Games '05—The Best of the Best' on Thursday at the Araneta Coliseum, presented by San Miguel Pale Pilsen, Hapee and Volvo."

As explained by the promoters, past cage greats and present-day stars of both schools banner each side and battle for pride, honor and prestige.

Needless to say, the event has the "trimmings of a classic encounter with neither squad, based on their respective rosters, enjoying a distinct advantage over the other."

* * *

But aren't they worried about the timing of the event? Bobong Velez, the impresario who had seen the PBA to its greatest seasons at the tills, was asked.

Not to worry, Mr. Bobong assured.

They are neither rejecting nor contesting a new happy development in the national sports landscape.

In truth, they are joining the celebration for the overwhelming success scored by RP in the SEA Games.

"This is what this dream game is all about, a celebration," Mr. Velez said. "Because everybody is elated, happy, in a mood to celebrate and indulge."

So how are ticket sales coming along?

"It was hard to believe at first, but we are almost sold out. The mood is positive, we are sustaining the fiesta atmosphere started with that wonderful SEA Games performance."

Velez said this should be a perfect time to cap a rivalry between La Salle and Ateneo, in a festive atmosphere involving fans, the pep squads, and even alumni of both schools.

* * *

The appetizer, involving alumni well past their salad days, will be at 4 p.m., legends versus the greats.

"The casts involve varsity standouts from the '60s, '70s and '80s," Velez bared.

To name a few: Lim Em Beng, Gabby Velasco, Alex Marquez, Aldo Perez, Jong Uichico for La Salle; Jimmy and Harry Alabanza, Tito Panlilio, Chito Afable, Ricky Palou, Eric Reyes, Nonoy Chuatico, Ogie Narvasa for Ateneo.

The format will fit players from the '60s in the first quarter, alumni from the '70s in the second quarter, players from the '80s in the third, before an open fielding of players of whatever timber, hairdo, sex drive and blood pressure in the final quarter.

The main event will be a mix and clash of eight PBA players and four UAAP standouts from each side.

A classic encounter is inevitable, assured Bobong Velez.

So far, La Salle had prevailed in the last three Dream Games.

"This is the 30th year of this affair, but Ateneo, the Hail Mary team, could finally spring a winner," Bobong said.

Why?

"Tomorrow, Dec. 8, is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception."

It's a holiday of obligation.

THE FURY BEGINS
DARIO "El Indio de Oro" AZUAGA
VS
GERRY "Geronimo" PEÑALOSA
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Early X-Mas present for Go Teng Kok

In Huddle

Beth Celis

TODAY, I INTEND to send athletics association president Go Teng Kok an early Christmas present. It's a golden needle with a piece of thread and it's lodged in a tiny box wrapped in red tin foil.

I know GTK direly needs this gift. He could use it to close the small hole in his trouser's pocket where he said he kept the 10 gold SEAG medals, only to find that there were only nine. He could also use it to stitch up his big, cantankerous mouth which often spews grandiose pronouncements, brimstone and fetid green goo.

I know I shouldn't be saying this. It's not nice to strike a man when he's down. And GTK can be considered humbled after he fell flat on his face following his declaration on national television that he would hang himself if his prediction didn't come true.

I could forgive GTK for his braggadocio, but not for that phone call he made in the early morning hours of Saturday, Dec. 3, the day my column on him came out.

* * *

I was roused from deep slumber by the incessant ringing of my cellphone that morning. I immediately recognized the voice on the other end of the line. The accent and timbre were unmistakable. It was GTK ranting, as he made reference to my column and challenged me the way he did national training director Mike Keon, whose forecast turned out to be correct.

I was to crawl under his legs not "if," but "when our country's male and female marathoners win the last two golds in athletics. He was so sure of the feat that he even suggested that I bring a representative in case I was not up to crawling under.

Drowsy, I could not react immediately, his utter rudeness failing to sink in. I just soaked in all the hysteria.

First hour the following morning, I got calls from media friends accusing me of murder. GTK, they said, had just hanged-himself after the Filipino entries in the men's marathon failed to bag the gold.

Of course, they were just joking because that's the very last thing GTK would do. He feebly offered to resign from his post "if the people clamored for it," and said he was willing to crawl under Keon's legs.

* * *

"Are you going to ask him to do it?" I asked Keon, who must be getting miffed at GTK's incessant challenge for the crawl.

Every time one of his athletes won a gold, GTK would catch his attention and give him the sign. He'd point to Keon, and then to that area under his legs.

Each time, Keon would ignore his challenge and just smile.

"No, I'm not going to ask him to crawl under. Despite the fact that he was so *bastos* (rude) to have made those gestures. Despite the call he made just before the marathon, accusing me baselessly of so many things. It's not in my nature to subject a person to public humiliation. I didn't want the athletes to lose," Mike said, as he accepted my congratulations for his prophetic talents.

"I couldn't call it a talent; I based my predictions on the assessment of the coaches."

Mike didn't object when I told him he had the Midas Touch in sports. I also told him about the good things I heard while I was in Laoag last week. People there were saying he initiated the fitness revolution, from old to young, rich and poor, male or female.

"Just about everyone is jogging or walking at all times of the day and night. People are in the streets keeping fit," said Mike Garcia from Mayor Mike Fariñas' office.

* * *

"Hey, but we could have done better in athletics. This is not to denigrate the athletes, but we could have won more golds..."

"With a better training program?" I provided the words which Mike was groping for. He has now become overly cautious with his statements.

Mike said athletics was given the biggest budget (P12 million) for training and the most international exposure (14).

* * *

"Is it true that you were hit by a flying water bottle while watching a boxing bout in Bacolod?'" I texted PBA Commissioner Noli Eala the other day.

His response: "Almost. Fortunately, the bag I placed on my head served as a buffer."

Noli was supposed to sit in the TV broadcast panel that would cover the La Salle-Ateneo dream game on Dec. 8 at the Araneta Coliseum, but he decided to just watch and enjoy the games.

Sports fans get closer to the action

From page A25

seconds) and broke her own record of 11.76, established in the 1982 New Delhi Games. The feat made her the first woman to score back-to-back victories in the 100-meter finals of the Asian Games.

PDI Sports, which had its first Olympic coverage in Seoul 1988, has never missed a single Olympiad ever since.

In the 1988 Seoul Olympics, the section noted that bowler Arianne Cerdeña won the first Philippine Olympic "gold" in 64 years when she topped the women's singles finals in Seoul, South Korea; although the medal did not count in the official medal tally because bowling was only an exhibition event in the 24th modern Olympics. The one that counted was the bronze clinched by light flyweight Leopoldo Serantes in boxing.

Now, as INQUIRER Sports gets ready for the next decade, the desk has strategized on innovations that will make the section more visually attractive, reader-friendly and informative.

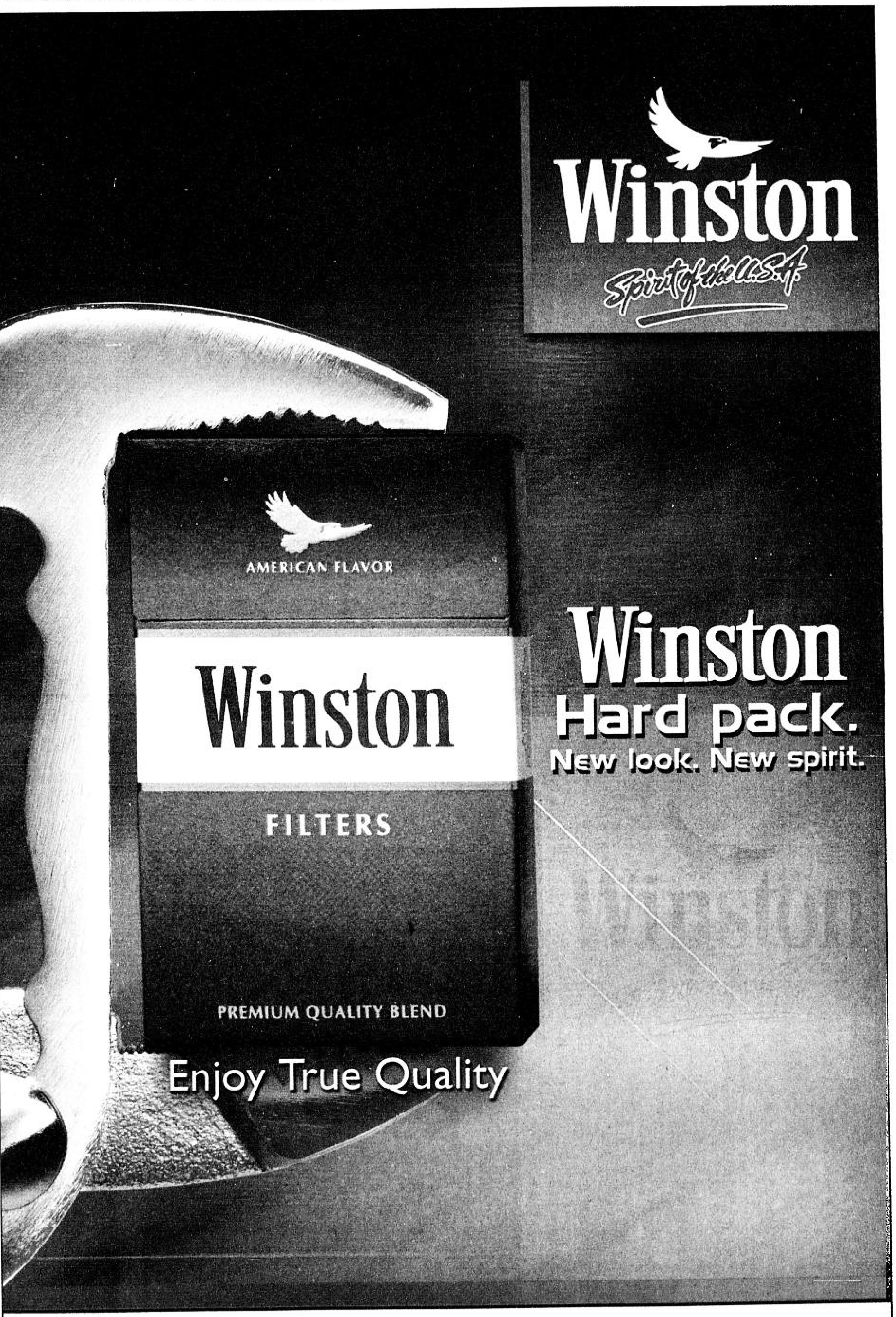
Short feature articles, sports or game tips, as well as facts and trivia boxes will become regular fare on the Sports pages, as are modular page layouts.

Trivia boxes will pick the reader's mind, and sports tips, courtesy of the country's heroes in traditional and non-traditional sports ranging from athletics to X-Games, will help improve the sports enthusiast's performance.

Facts and trivia boxes, ably put together by the PDI Research staff, was on stream early this year until space limitations forced the Sport desk to put them temporarily in the backburner. They will return with a bang now that the 23rd Southeast Asian Games are over.

INQUIRER Sports prides itself in becoming the first local broadsheet to go eight full color pages in the years 2003 and 2004. Four months after the first eight-page pullout came off the presses, INQUIRER Sports registered the biggest increase in readership among INQUIRER sections, according to a study made by the research firm McKann Erickson.

With a pool of veteran and award-winning reporters and columnists, INQUIRER Sports is well equipped to further improve its craft and bring sports fans much, much closer to the action. *The Inquirer Sports Staff*



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INQBOX Question of the Week

TEAM Philippines: SEA Games champion! ☺
Your message to our Filipino athletes?

Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's **INQBOX** *wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Shirt! Ü*

inquirer box
name/age/city/message.
[illegible]
(Maximum of 160 characters)

*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808 local 335. Provincial winners can text:
inquirer ad name/age/city/mailing address
to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them

Inquirer
menu

Tribu Sugbu trips Taguig

ANTIPOLO CITY—FIRST NBC CHAMPION Tribu Sugbu beat Forward Taguig, 71-64, Tuesday to advance to the semifinals of the Nature's Spring-Cong. Ronnie Puno Cup basketball tournament at the City Auditorium here.

Doroteo Almacin exploded for 16 points to lead the Tribesmen of businessmen Lito Gillamac and Mario King to their third straight victory in the tourney co-organized by ABL (Antipolo Basketball League) and supported by Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil and Molten.

Spring Cooking Oil beat Bacchus-Metro Manila, 89-83, joining Tribu in the semis together with Vic Sumulong Ex-PBA Stars and Homer Cagers.

Congressman Sumulong's boys ripped Homer, 110-98, while Antips downed Boysen Phils.-backed PICE-Rizal, 109-105.

The Cooking Oil Masters of national shooter Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla made it to the top four by virtue of a better quotient over Forward Taguig.

The scores:

TRIBU 71—Almacin 16, Cainglet 13, Nicdao 8, Sanz 8, Mercado 6, Bucao 6, Sevilla 5, Huelar 4, Calo 0, Yabut 0, Santos 0.

TAGUIG 64—De Gula 10, Vilar 8, Robillos 8, Lapinid 8, Sanders 5, Reyes 5, Abad 4, Gonzales 4, Tiongco 3, Corbin 2, Hubalde 0, Barretto 0, Mallari 0, Taguines 0, Inigo 0.

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region V, Legazpi City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR INTEGRATED CARGO HANDLING SERVICES FOR NFA ALBAY

The National Food Authority, Regional Office, Legazpi City invites all qualified contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the provisions of integrated cargo handling services equivalent to more or less 120,000 MT and 6,000 MT NFA local and imported grains in Tabaco City and Legazpi City for the year 2006, respectively. The estimated budget for the contract to be bid is P25,369,677.00 for Tabaco City and P1,450,682.90 for Legazpi City. Integrated cargo handling services required by NFA Albay includes arrastre, stevedoring, trucking (from and to the port to NFA utilized warehouses within the concerned areas) and all related grains handling services in the NFA receiving/source warehouses.

The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

Activity	Date	Time
1. Issuance of eligibility requirements and other bid documents	- Nov. 30, 2005 to Dec. 15, 2005	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
2. Pre-bid Conference	- Dec. 15, 2005	10:00 AM
3. Deadline for Submission of Eligibility requirements and Bid Proposal	- Dec. 28, 2005	9:30 AM
4. Opening of Bids	- Dec. 28, 2005	10:00 AM

The venue for the pre-bidding conference and submission and opening of bids shall be at the Conference Room, NFA Regional Office, Pier Site, Legazpi City.

Funding Source will be the Corporate Operating Budget.

The eligibility requirements and other bid documents can be obtained from the RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-transferrable/non-refundable registration fee in the amount of P7,000.00 and P4,000.00 for Tabaco City area and Legazpi City area, respectively.

For further inquiries, you may contact the RBAC Secretariat in the following telephone numbers: (052) 480-7933/480-7015/480-7085/820-008 and fax number (052) 480-7900.

It is required that prospective bidders must have a single largest contract completed within the last five (5) years and similar to the contract to be bid whose value adjusted to current prices must be at least fifty (50%) percent of the ABC.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) JOSE B. GUEVARA
RBAC Chairman

(PDI - December 1 & 7, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
Office of the Assistant Vice-President - Bicol Cluster
SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequena, Naga City
Telephone Nos. (054) 473-91-52, (054) 811-7079, 250-81-20(F)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

TWO-YEAR JANITORIAL SERVICES CONTRACT FOR SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM - BICOL CLUSTER

The Social Security System – Bicol Cluster is inviting bidders for a two-year contract for janitorial services, including supplies and materials, tools and equipment to keep and maintain the cleanliness, sanitation and good housekeeping of SSS branch offices in the Bicol Area.

1. The Social Security System – Bicol Cluster, through the SSS annual budget for Maintenance and Repairs – Building – Janitorial Services for year 2006 to 2008 intends to apply the sum of P2,493,480.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for two-year janitorial services. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The Social Security System –·Bicol Cluster now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for two-year contract for janitorial services to keep and maintain the cleanliness, sanitation and good housekeeping of SSS building, premises and leased offices of the various SSS branch offices in the Bicol Area. These include the furnishing of labor, tools, equipment, materials and supplies and the performance of service including supervision in accordance with the SSS prescribed scope of services and methodologies, standards and manpower complement and deployment schedules.

Place/Address subject of bidding	No. of Janitors	No. of Working Hours/Day	No. of Working Days/Week
1. Naga Branch Office and surrounding premises Naga City	4	8 hours	6
2. Legaspi Branch Office Legaspi City	2	8 hours	5
3. Daet Branch Office Daet, Camarines Norte	1	8 hours	5
4 Sorsogon Branch Office Sorsogon City	1	8 hours	5
5. Iriga Branch Office, Iriga City	1	8 hours	5
6. Goa Branch Office Goa, Camarines Sur	1	8 hours	5
7. Masbate Branch Office Masbate City	1	8 hours	5
8. Virac Branch Office Virac, Catanduanes	1	4 hours	5
9. Tabaco Branch Office, Tabaco City	1	4 hours	5
Total	13		

Delivery of the goods and services is required by February 12, 2006 to February 12, 2008. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instructions to Bidders (ITB).

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Social Security System – Bicol Cluster and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of P5,000.00. The method of payment will be on a cash basis, payable at the Teller, Administrative Section, Office of the AVP-Bicol Cluster, 2nd Floor, SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequena, Naga City. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The Social Security System – Bicol Cluster will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on January 4, 2006 at 9:00 A.M. at the Administrative Section, Office of the AVP – Bicol Cluster, 2nd Floor, SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequena, Naga City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 8:30 A.M. January 18, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of cash and in the amount of P24,934.80. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on January 18, 2006 at 8:30 A.M. at the Administrative Section, Office of the AVP-Bicol Cluster, 2nd Floor, SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequena, Naga City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The Social Security System – Bicol Cluster reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bids and Awards Committee – Bicol Cluster
BAC – Bicol Cluster Secretariat
2nd Floor, SSS Bldg., Concepcion Pequena
Naga City Zip Code 4400
Telephone Nos. (054) 473-91-52, (054)811-7079
Facsimile Nos. (054) 473-91-52, 250-81-20

(Sgd.) MA. TERESA C. IGNACIO
Assistant Vice-President & Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee
Bicol Cluster

This is a republication.

(PDI - Dec 7, 2005)

Star-studded Nike eyes Fil-Am repeat

BAGUIO CITY—NIKE SHOOTS FOR A VICtory repeat in the Fil-Am golf championships as action in the centerpiece division starts today at the Camp John Hay and Baguio Country Club courses here.

With a team built around the crack Canlubang squad in the Philippine Airlines Interclub, Nike is fancied to prevail in both the Fil and Am divisions with Southwoods again looming as the side most likely to spoil the party.

Juvic Pagunsan will tee off in his final Fil division stint, just three days after winning the 23rd Southeast Asian Games individual gold medal and leading the RP team to a golden finish at The Country Club in Laguna.

PAGUNSAN: Still hot

Former RP Am champ Jun Bernis, Jay Bayron, veteran Abe Rosal and National Caddies Open standouts Mark Fernando and Mario Labajo will back up Pagunsan, who won duel with Artemio Murakami last year to clinch the title for Nike.

Southwoods, with Murakami electing to turn pro, will now be led by RP Team alternate Tonlits Asistio. Erwin Vinluan, Mico Yee, Anthony Fernando and RP pool members Gene Bondoc and Erwin Vinluan are the other members.

Curiously, Southwoods put RP Team member Michael Bibat as spearhead of its Am squad that also includes Jun Jun Plana, Mico Alejandro, Jong Laput and Hanson So Jr.

Tournament format calls for five players to play each day with the top four scores counting.

Del Monte is also coming in with the core of its 2004 Interclub champion squad led by Buboy Jaraula and Louie Dacudao. *Musong R. Castillo*

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
Port of Mactan

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

Pursuant to the provision of Section 2601 to 2610 of the TCCP, as amended, in relation to CMO No. 5-2003 dated March 17, 2003, CMO 18-2003 dated July 25, 2003, and CMO No. 5-2005 dated June 15, 2005, there will be a PUBLIC AUCTION SALE to be conducted by this Port on Monday, December 19, 2005 at 10:00 in the morning to be held at the 2nd Floor, Bureau of Customs Building, Cargo Area, Lapu-Lapu City, the herein described articles in Lot. Said articles shall be available for viewing on December 14 & 15, 2005.

LOT # 01 WRISTWATCHES (111 kilos) Floor Price : Php 2,600,000.00	Assorted Wristwatches (Seiko & Citizen) Wristwatches (G-Shock) Guess Wristwatches 5,858 PCS Location: U-FREIGHT WAREHOUSE
LOT # 02 ELECTRONICS	1 Ctn /1 Set Handheld Radion with base (Kenwood Brand) 1 Ctn /5 Pcs. Cannonmate Camera (Model-AE-23) 5 Pcs Cannonmate Camera (Model-AE-21) 5 Pcs. Cannonmate Camera (Model-AE-808) 1 Box/3 Cases Battery Plates 5 Pcs Personal Alarm 1 Box Dynamo for Toys 1 Box/30 Pcs Soldering Lead 4 Boxes Parts for Wall Clock 1 Box/1 Unit Blow-down Alarm 4 Boxes EWP 60X80 Parts 1 Box/30 Pcs Assorted Clock Parts Location: U-FREIGHT WAREHOUSE
Floor Price : Php 63,552.00	2 Sets Pansat Antenna 51 Packs Small Electronic Screws 56 Pcs Cable Connectors 51 Packs Electronic Screws 4 boxes/4 units Electric Sewing Machine 1 Set Electronic Servo Element 1 Box/40 Pcs Electro Micro Motors 1 Box/200 Pcs. Electronics Assy 1 Box/36 Pcs Electronic Parts (Cassette Ejector) 159 Pcs Electric Micro Motors Location: CUSTOMS STORAGE SHED
LOT # 03 FILTERS Floor Price : Php 151,250.00	3 Pcs Air Compressor with Filters 1 Box/50 Pcs Air Filter 1 Box/1 Set Air Purifier & Flow Equalizer 1 Box/1 Set Heavy Duty Filter (Spin-on Assy) Location: CUSTOMS STORAGE SHED
LOT # 04 PERSONAL BELONGINGS	1 Box/21 Pcs Assorted Maong Pants 1 Box/68 Pcs. Assorted T-shirts 1 Box/16 Pcs. Assorted Maong Pants 1 Box/12 Pairs Ladies Shoes Jump Brand-Rubber 1 Box Facial Tissue Paper 1 Box/4 Units Coffee Maker. 1 Box/150 Pcs Doormat 1 Pc Bathing Suit 1 Box/9 Packs Winter Suit (Sweater) 1 Box/6 Pairs Advance Rubber Shoes 1 Ctn Jewelry Box 1 Box Plastic Hanger Location: U-FREIGHT WAREHOUSE
Floor Price : Php 17,300.00	1 Roll Belt of Rubber 2 Boxes/2,000 Pcs. Hairclips 1 Set Plastic Bed Location: CUSTOMS STORAGE SHED
LOT # 05 FURNITURES Floor Price : Php 4,100.00	100 Pcs Assorted Furniture Fittings 1 Box/200 Pcs Furniture Metal Handle 1 Set Bathroom Fixtures 1,250 kgs /11 Cans Wood Filler Location: CUSTOMS STORAGE SHED
LOT # 06 MOTOR PARTS	1 Crate/1 Pc Turbine Inlet Assembly 1 Pc Outboard Motor Yamaha Brand 1 Pc Yamaha Motorcycle with engine Location: U-FREIGHT WAREHOUSE
TO BE RELEASED UPON ISSUANCE OF DENR PERMIT ← Floor Price : Php 58,000.00	1 Box/1 Pc Water Jet Shaft Seal 1 Box/50 Pcs Metal Parts 1 Set Pneumatic Starter 64 Pcs Mat Grounding Snap 20 Pcs Mat Grounding Snap 1 Pc Foot Operated Water Pump 1 Pc Marino Automatic Demand Pump 1 Pc Pump Accessory 2 rolls Hose 1 Ctn Metering Pump with Accessories 1 Ctn 1 pc Rexroth Pump 10 rools Welding Wire 1 crate/9 rolls Welding wire 1 box/2 pcs Hydraulic Cylinder 1 pc Sensor Amplifier 1 pack Sarning Rod 3 boxes/6,000 pcs Bolts and Nuts 1 box/400 pcs Transformer Reminder 2 boxes/1 set Accessory 1 box/4 pcs Antilock Brake 1 box/30 pcs Auto Parts (made of plastic) 4 pcs Banzo Blade (tree cutter) 225 pcs Suntech Cover 3 pcs Cylinder 1 pouch/5 pcs Drill Bit 1 pouch/1 pc Gasket 1 pouch/2 pcs O ring 1 box/1,000 pcs Nozzle Tips Location: CUSTOMS STORAGE SHED
LOT # 07 COMPUTER PARTS/STEREO	1 box/5 pcs used Cash Register (IBM) 1 ctn Play Station Toy Stick 1 box/100 pcs Black CD-R 700 MB 80 2 boxes/2 pcs Surface mounted Speaker 2.5 W5 1 pc CD Stereo Cassette Aiwa Brand 1 pc Palm Size PC & Storage Card Telephone Answering System 1 pc Panasonic Brand with Caller ID 10 pcs Aiwa Radio Cassette EQ 202 R 1 set Digital Alphastation 500 Work-station, 3 feet Diameter Parabolic Location: U-FREIGHT WAREHOUSE
Floor Price : 265,950.00	1 pc CD Disk Cleaner 1 box/1 pc Computer Parts (motherboard) Location: CUSTOMS STORAGE SHED
LOT # 08 JEWELRY Floor Price : Php 160,500.00	Assorted Jewelry (Yellow, Gold Bracelet 18k) 1 pc Gold Ring with Birthstone Location: CASHIER DIVISION
LOT # 09 OTHERS	1 pc Age Old Church Bell 12 inches Diameter Location: U-FREIGHT WAREHOUSE
Floor Price : Php 32,050.00	4 pcs Base Platform · 1 box/1 pc Dissolve Oxygen Meter · 2 boxes/288 pcs Golf Balls · 1 box/7 pcs Spyderco Knives · 2 boxes/18 pcs Hublers Vest · 60 boxes/6,000 pcs Nylon Thread · 2 rolls Plastic Packing Tape · 1 box/30 pcs Washing Machine Base · 1 roll Black Net · 1 bag Honeybee Net · 9 boxes Plastic Parts · 1 box Plastic Casing · 1 box/15 pcs Mounter Tray · 1 crate/10 sub-crate Base Liquid · 1 crate/5 sacks Plastic Resins · 2 pcs Replaceable Cartridge · 6 pcs Facepiece Assembly · 4 sacks Plastic Resins · 4 boxes/4 cans Toyo Ink · 1 pouch/203 pcs Punching Pin · 3 boxes/3 rolls Plastic Strap · 2 boxes/100 pcs Vinyl Tiles · 1 pack/1 unit Precision Stamping · 1 box/1 pack Gold Plated Sheets · 1 box/3 rolls Nylon Fishing Thread Location: CUSTOMS STORAGE SHED

BASIC GUIDELINES:

1. File the duly accomplished Registration Form (name, address, TIN and other relevant circumstances to be indicated.
2. Php 2,000.00 Registration Fee (Non-Refundable)
3. Php 20,000.00 Cash Bond (Refundable)
4. All participants, whether natural or juridical, must submit the latest income and business tax returns duly stamped and received by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.
5. The highest bidder shall be required to pay 50% of the bid price either in cash and / or Manager's Check immediately and the balance of 50% shall be paid within the next business day.
6. Payment by Cashier's / Manager's Checks to the Bureau of Customs, Port of Mactan shall bear the following
   a. Pay to the order of Land Bank of the Philippines.
   b. For Credit of the Bureau of Customs.
   c. For the account of ____________
      Bidder

For further details, please contact Mr. Epimaco Mangubat, Chief, Auction & Cargo Disposal Division, Port of Mactan, Telephone No. (032) 340-6066

(Sgd.) ATTY. ERNESTO D. URBANO
Sub-Port Collector of Customs

(PDI - December 7, 2005)

Gallent named Harbour coach

SLOWLY BUT SURELY, JORGE Gallent is realizing his dreams.

The son and namesake of revered pelotari Jorge, Gallent was appointed new head coach of Harbour Centre in the PBL Heroes Cup, a job he has long been longing for since becoming a sidekick of other coaches in various leagues in the country.

"It's time to give Jorge the break, I know him since our childhood days," said Harbour Centre owner Mike Romero. "He's an intense and dedicated player, so I'm sure he would become a good coach. We're really glad that he accepted our offer for him to become our coach."

Gallent, 36, will fill the void left by Dindo Pumaren, who stepped down last week to concentrate on the title drive of the University of the East Warriors in the UAAP next year.

Romero, a basketball and shooting fanatic, also designated long time associate Erick Arejola as team manager.

Prior to his appointment, Gallent, a former topnotch junior golfer, served as assistant coach at Rain or Shine, formerly Welcoat Paints, and also at the College of St. Benilde in the NCAA. He also played for Tanduay for three years in the pro league.

"We're going to miss Jorge, but it's a good break for him," said Rain or Shine co-owner Raymund Yu.

But Gallent is facing a daunting task to end Harbour Centre's alarming skid.

The Port Masters, bannered by some of the country's finest amateur players, lost their last four games after hurdling their first two games.

"It's a challenge for me, I just hope I can do something good for the team," said Gallent.

GMA to fete athletes

TO CELEBRATE THE TRIUMPH of the Filipino athletes in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games, President Macapagal-Arroyo will be feting Team Philippines at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium at 4:30 p.m. today.

After Team Philippines' victory parade in Makati, the Filipino athletes will proceed to Ninoy Aquino Stadium to join President Arroyo, First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, officials of the National Sports Associations, the Philippine Sports Commission and the SEAG corporate sponsors.

Cebu's Alta Vista gets back Sta. Lucia Cup

CONSISTENCY WAS THE KEY AND Alta Vista showed it had loads of it in the three-stage final leg as the mighty Cebuanos reclaimed the overall title in the just-concluded Sta. Lucia Golf Tour 2005.

Alta Vista scored four victories out of the nine disputed in the final leg, aside from two runner-up and three third-place finishings to post a runaway win in the series that featured eight members of the Sta. Lucia's growing family of courses.

Up by just three going into the Luzon leg, Alta Vista amassed 103 points built around an overpowering stint at the Orchard stop.

There it won divisions I and II and placed second in Division III to finish 21 points clear of Eagle Ridge with a 106-hole total of 179.

Alta Vista had a measly 26-point output at Summit Point but bounced back by topping the Eagle Ridge leg the next day with 35.

Alta Vista first won the crown three years ago and lost it to Rancho Palos Verdes last year. Eagle Ridge still holds the most number of victories with three.

Palos Verdes, second going into the final leg, could only score 84 and slipped to third at 157 in the Tour also supported by Samsung, Omega, Titleist-Footjoy as hole-in-one sponsors and Philippine Airlines as official airline.

The final standings saw Royale Tagaytay claiming to fourth at 129, Orchard fifth at 82, Summit Point 79, Lakewood 44 and Caliraya Springs bringing up the rear at 37.

Eagle Ridge Four x Fore Invt'l gets going today

TRIPS TO VARIOUS DESTINATIONS in Europe and Asia as well as merchandise items worth more than P500,000 will be at stake in the Four x Fore Tee, the member-guest tournament of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club, which starts today in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

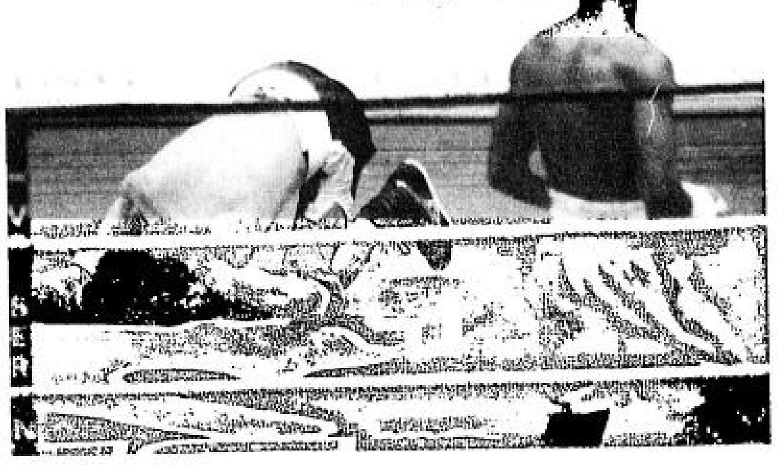
Venue of the 36-hole tourney spread out in four days are two of the four championship courses of the country's biggest golf club, the ones designed by Nick Faldo and Greg Norman.

At least 200 member-guest teams are vying for the prizes which include a trip for two to any destination in Europe donated by Lufthansa, trip for two to Hong Kong via Philippine Airlines, top-of-the-line golf sets from Callaway and Titleist and appliances from Samsung.

The overseas trips will first be staked as prizes for aces on designated holes. In case nobody scores a hole-in-one, they will be raffled off during the awards ceremony on Friday, Dec. 9.

The tourney used to be known as Eagle Ridge Invitational but organizers led by project director engineer Wini Gob decided to rename it to stress the importance of Eagle Ridge being the only club in the country and among the few in the whole of Asia to have four 18-hole courses.

The list of early sponsors includes CIGI, Aqua Dynne Drilling, Pac-Sports, Microtel Inn & Suites, RS Night Hawk, House of Hana, SG Enterprises, WG Construction, GG&A Club Shares and Mr. Edwin Celino.



PARRA looks at France's Sydney Olympic gold medalist Asloum falling to the ring in their WBA championship flyweight bout, Dec. 5. AFP

Parra keeps WBA flyweight diadem

PARIS—LORENZO PARRA OF VEnezuela successfully defended his WBA flyweight title for the fifth time, scoring a unanimous decision over Frenchman Brahim Asloum on Monday.

Parra knocked down the 2000 Olympic light flyweight champion in the second round and went on to improve his record to 27-0 while handing the Frenchman his first loss in 20 professional fights.

Parra dominated Asloum in the eighth round, hammering him with a left hook.

Trailing on the judges' scorecards Asloum appeared to try for a knockout in the later rounds, but Parra was able to avoid any serious blows. *AP*

Spurs notch 4th in a row

ORLANDO, FLORIDA—TIM DUNCAN had 26 points, 12 rebounds and five blocks, Tony Parker added 20 points, and the San Antonio Spurs beat the Orlando Magic 110-85 in the NBA on Monday.

Duncan, a nine-year veteran, and Rasho Nesterovic frustrated Orlando's second-year player Dwight Howard, who had a double-double by halftime but shot just 4-of-18 from the field. He finished with 13 points and 15 rebounds.

"I'm very old," Duncan said, smiling. "I was looking at it before the game and I'm something like 9½ years older than (Howard). That's crazy. He doesn't look like a 19-year-old. He's got so much promise. I'm just glad I'll be out of the league when he's peaking."

It was the fourth straight win for the Spurs and fourth consecutive loss for the Magic.

Robert Horry scored 18 points, leading a bench that is a strength of the reigning champions. The Spurs' reserves outscored the Magic's 45-21. *AP*

COMPLETE RESULTS: San Antonio 110, Orlando 85; Dallas 102, Chicago 94; Minnesota 91, Utah 77; LA Clippers 99, Miami 89. *AP*

SPORTS WATCH

5-cocker on

ROUND TWO OF Roligon Mega Cockpit's Incredibol Na, Apordabol Pa 5-cock derby rages at 5 p.m. today, with Lakpue Drug Inc. and Thunderbird Enertone as sponsors. As of yesterday, 278 cockers and breeders have submitted their entries and are eyeing the P2 million guaranteed prize as well as the brand new Mazda (for the fastest win champion) in the 80-fight program. The last day of eliminations will be on Dec. 10, or field straight five cocks on Dec. 12, according to host Rolly Ligon said. For inquiries, call 851-2275, 833-1638 and 852-9812.

PCAP leads

MAJORITY OF PINOY Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) members have firmed up their support of the Pamaskong Salpukan 6-cock derby which will blast off on Monday, Dec. 12 at the Makati Coliseum. Elimination rounds (3-cock) are scheduled on Dec. 12, 14, 17, 19 and 21. Participants with scores of 1.5, 2 and 2.5 points will compete on Dec. 26, while those with 3 points will tangle on Dec. 28. To be hosted by WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp., the event dangles a P3-million prize and a brand-new Toyota Innova, which is on display at Makati Coliseum lobby. For details, call 896-3545 and 895-6475.

Derby today

PROVINCIAL COCKers and breeders clash today at the fully air-conditioned San Juan Coliseum via the special 5-stag derby that will feature more than 120 fights. Derby starts at 10 a.m. Leading the list of participants are members of Kapampangan Gamefowl Breeders Association (KGBA) and Tarlac Gamefowl Breeders Association (Tagba), two groups which figured prominently in the recent 2005 Bakbakan 9-stag derby. Up next at SJC is the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-cock derby on Dec. 12 and 14. Headed by Gov. Ito Ynares, NCA is now bigger and stronger with more than 40 members. For details, call 0918-2620338 (Aba).

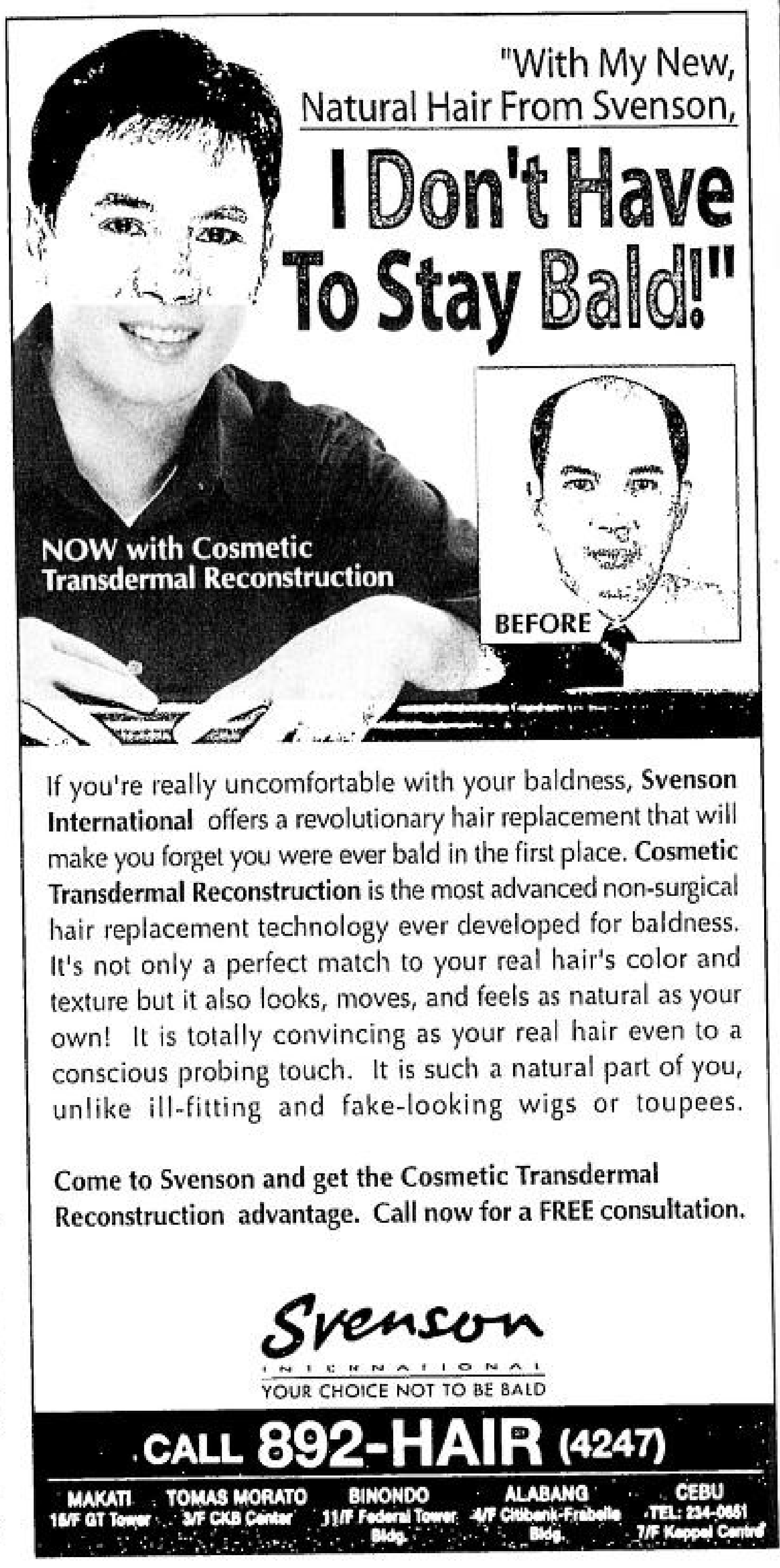
Bulls to retire Pippen jersey

CHICAGO—THE CHICAGO BULLS WILL REtire Scottie Pippen's jersey number 33 at halftime of Friday's game against the Los Angeles Lakers, adding to a long list of accolades.

Pippen, who spent 12 of his 17 NBA seasons with the Bulls, has an impressive list of accomplishments.

He and Michael Jordan led the Bulls to six NBA championships in the 1990s. A seven-time All-Star, Pippen was chosen as one of the NBA's 50 greatest players in 1996 and was on two U.S. teams that won Olympic gold medals. *AP*

SOLAR Sports will air the Boston-Houston tussle at 9:30 a.m. The Cleveland vs Sacramento game will be shown at 11 a.m. at Sports Plus.



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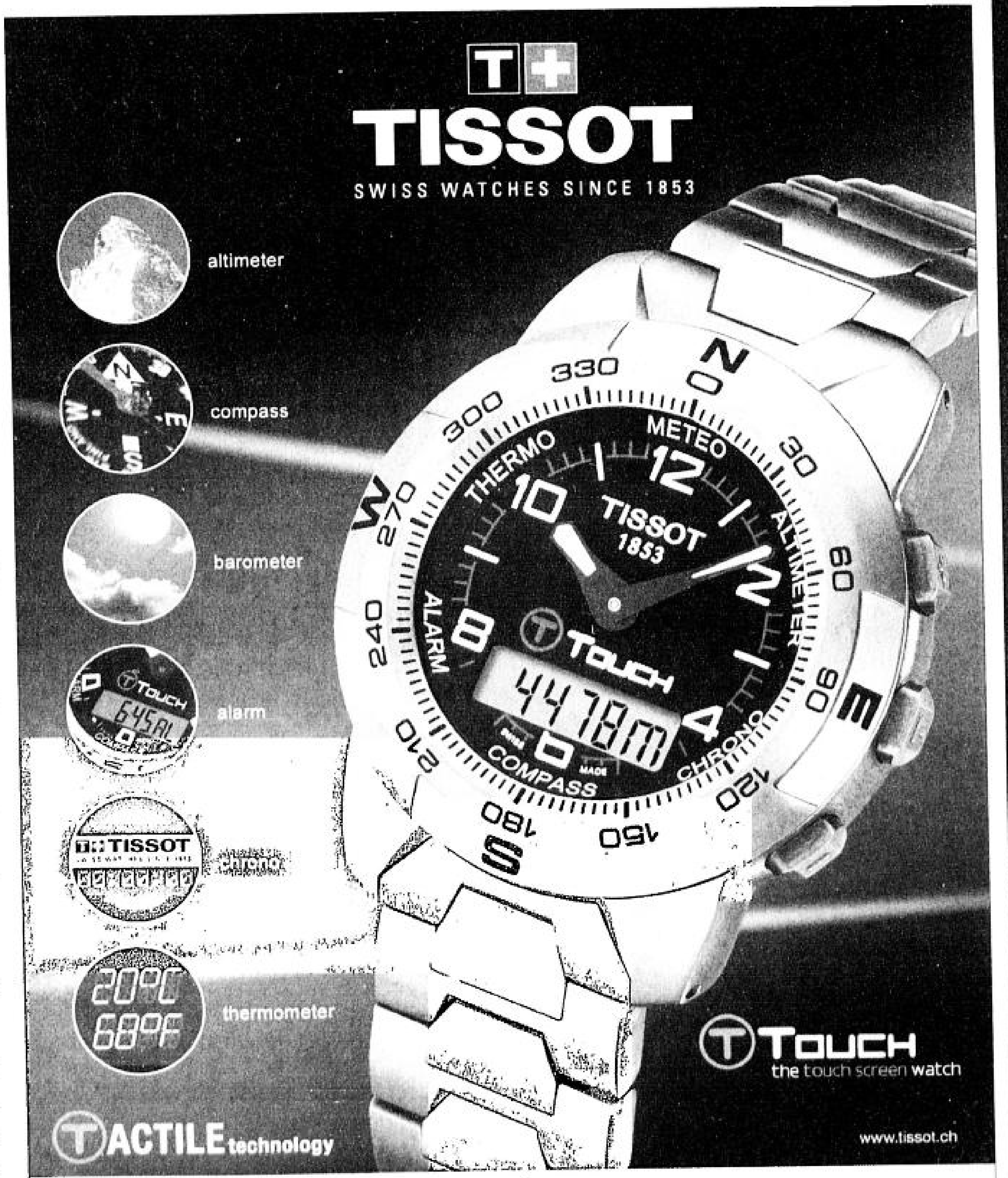

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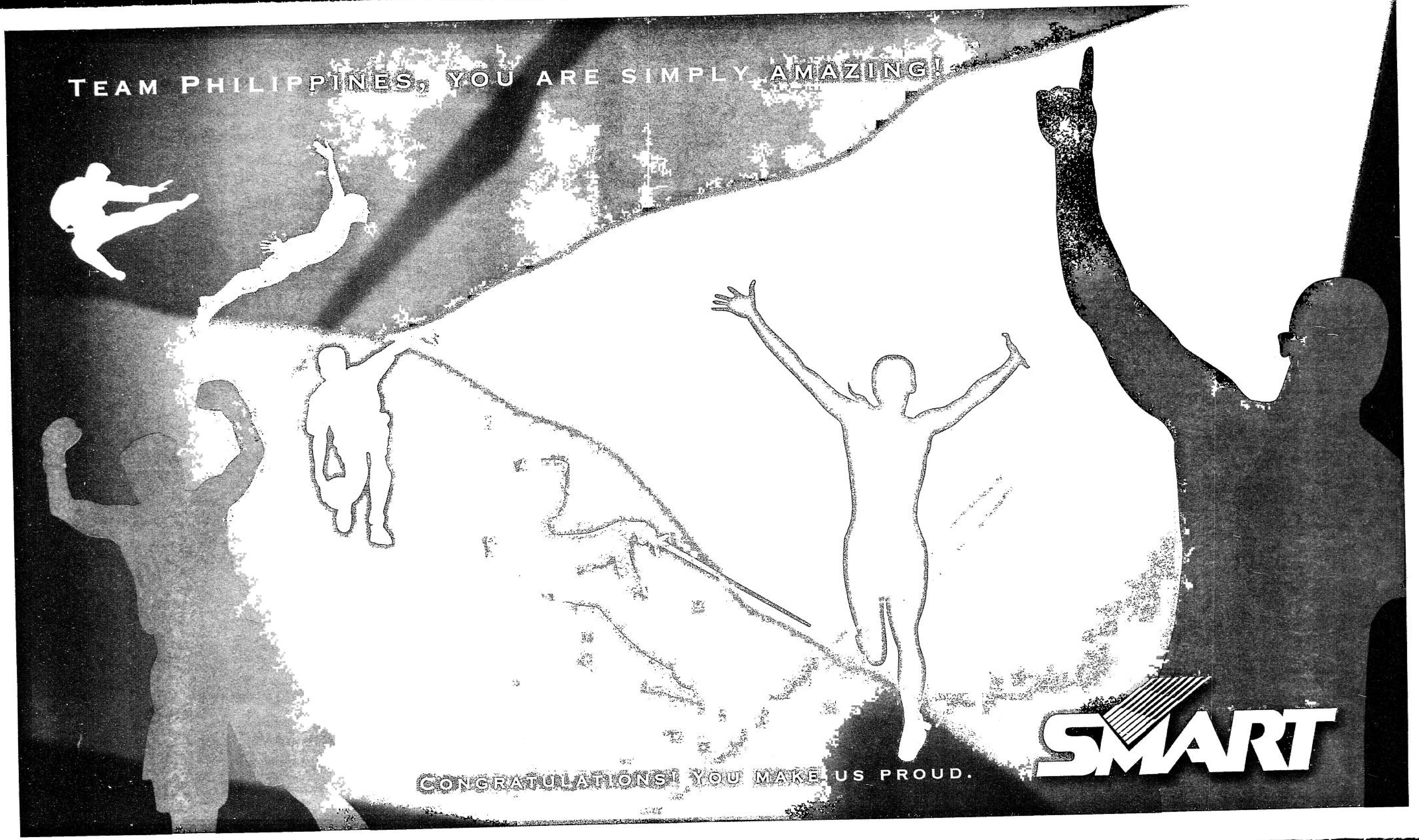
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Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

JIM GUIMO PUNZALAN

VIC del Rosario, right, says it was not his intention to "humiliate" Laurice Guillen.

'Boss Vic' airs side

By Marinel R. Cruz

IF MS GUILLEN WAS OFFENDed, it was not intentional," said Viva Entertainment big boss Vic del Rosario.

He was reacting to an INQUIRER Entertainment story where filmmaker Laurice Guillen said she had "felt humiliated" because of the manner in which she learned about her replacement as chair and chief executive officer of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP).

Del Rosario, also the presidential consultant for entertainment, said he sent a letter to Guillen dated Oct. 17 to inform her that Rolando "Jackie" Atienza would replace her. He said Guillen's office received the letter on Oct. 18.

"Boss Vic" added that he tried to arrange a meeting between Atienza and the director, but that the latter was not available on the date picked.

Guillen said she first learned of her replacement during the launch of the 7th Cinemanila International Film Festival on Oct. 12. That night at the Manila Hotel, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, festival main host, congratulated his cousin Jackie for the new appointment.

But Del Rosario explained that he had no way of knowing what the mayor would say at the time. "I was not aware that Mayor Atienza would congratulate his cousin," Del Rosario said in a phone interview on Monday.

In a statement sent to INQUIRER Entertainment on Monday, Del Rosario added that he "recognized Guillen's efforts as FDCP chair and supported her in whatever way I could during her tenure."

Guillen: "Procedure was not followed." Page A2/4.

Meanwhile, Del Rosario said he was pleased with the news that the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) has reissued Executive Order 255, a directive requiring all radio stations to broadcast a minimum of four original Pilipino recording every hour. *(See related story on this page.)*

In his recent report to Malacañang, Del Rosario recommended a new Executive Order that would supersede EO 255. The new EO should provide stiffer penalties for violators. He said some radio stations don't play Original Pilipino Music (OPM) at all.

"Singers, composers and record companies will also be happy to hear the news," said Del Rosario. "My office will help the

'BOSS VIC'/ A2-4

Gov't now serious about backing OPM

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS Commission, on the orders of Malacañang, has reissued an 18-year-old circular directing radio stations with musical formats to play at least four original Pilipino music per hour.

NTC chair Ronald Solis said the Palace gave no instructions to tighten the regulation, something that several members of the local music industry have been clamoring for.

"The industry is asking for more stringent penalties, like higher fines," said Solis in an interview. "But the memo from the President only told us to reiterate the directives in Executive Order 255 of 1987."

He said the NTC would henceforth monitor compliance strictly. Section 2 of the EO fines stations P100 per violation.

The EO also allows the NTC, "after due hearing, [to] suspend or cancel the Certificate of Registration and Authority to operate of any radio station in the event of re-

GOV'T/ A2-4

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■ **No cash yet for fest winners** A2/2

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Where are the fest winners' cash prizes?

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

AN E-MAIL RECEIVED ON SATurday by INQUIRER Entertainment claimed that winners in the local digital competition of the 7th Cinemanila International Film Festival, held last October, have yet to receive their cash prizes.

This was confirmed by winning filmmakers Mes de Guzman and Briccio Santos and Manila City Administrator Dino Nable.

"We've been following it up with city hall," De Guzman said.

De Guzman's film "Ang Daan Patungong Kalimugtong," placed second and was supposed to receive P1,000,000.

"I expected to receive it right away, especially since it came out in the papers and on TV that we were awarded those [big replicas of] checks onstage."

As an independent digital director, De Guzman explained, he had to take out loans just to finish his movie. "My creditors might think I have already received the money but was planning to run away from my obligations."

Maybe this week

"What I heard is they are hoping to give the cash prizes to all the winners at the same time," Santos said. His "Ala Verde, Ala Pobre" ranked third and was due to receive P750,000.

"It would be nice to get it in time for Christmas," Santos said.

City Administrator Nable told INQUIRER Entertainment, "We hope to give the cash prizes anytime this week or next."

He said: "We are just waiting for the funds from the city and the NCCA [National Commission for Culture and the Arts] to be released."

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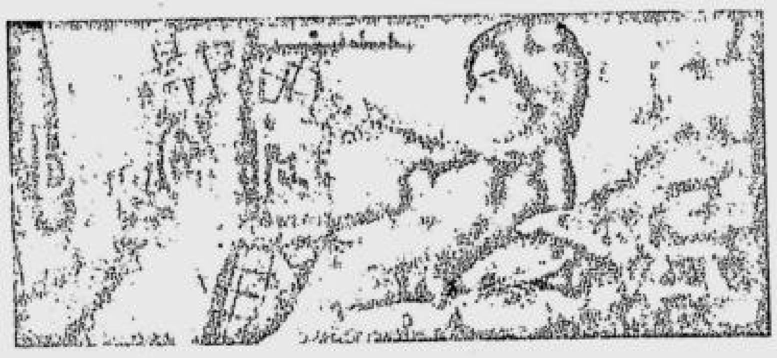

Bilog/Circles

Stars Reiven Bulado, Christopher Canizares, Archie de Calma, Alynna Velasquez
Directed by Cris Pablo

The lives of myriad urban characters (from a fruit vendor to a male hooker) intersect in the crossroads that is the Quezon Memorial Circle. These disparate and desperate city folks "form connections and disconnections, in their quest for success and meaning in their ordinary lives." Pablo's third digital film (after "Duda" and "Bathhouse"), "Bilog/Circles" topbills a cast of newcomers because it's a "workshop production" of Grupong Sinehan. But it also features mainstream stars Ara Mina, Tonton Gutierrez, Jan Marini Alano and Gerard Pizzaras. "I did it because I liked the story and I want to try acting in independent movies," quips Mina, who plays De Calma's schizophrenic sister. Exclusively shown in Robinsons cinemas.

"Kiss.Kiss, Bang Bang"

Stars Robert Downey Jr., Val Kilmer, Michelle Monaghan
Directed by Shane Black

A notoriously inept thief (Downey) inadvertently aces an audition. But instead of a movie set, he winds up in the middle of a murder investigation, aided by a gay private detective (Kilmer) and a childhood crush (Monaghan). Eleanor Ringel Gillespie of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution calls it "mean, fast and funny . . . and it adds up to a 'Seinfeld-ian' nothing." Her verdict: "Think 'Get Shorty,' only loonier." Robert K. Elder of the Chicago Tribune concurs: "It's a guilty pleasure . . . [It] isn't necessarily a reservoir of deep meaning. . . more like a puddle that invites us to splash around. Only when we're wet and enjoying ourselves are we told it's a puddle of gasoline."

In Her Shoes

Stars Cameron Diaz, Toni Collette, Shirley MacLaine
Directed by Curtis Hanson

Two sisters (Diaz and Collette), who are constantly at odds because of their striking personality differences—one's a party girl; the other, a prim lawyer—learn to bridge the gap between them with a little help from the feisty grandmother (MacLaine) they thought was dead. It has chick flick written all over it, but don't tell that to director Hanson, whose previous works are such testosterone fare as "LA Confidential" and "8 Mile." Ty Burr of the Boston Globe decides, "This isn't a movie about subtlety ... and that makes MacLaine's performance even more marvelous." Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun-Times waxes rhapsodic: "[It] starts out with the materials of an ordinary movie and becomes a rather special one . . . Like a good poem, it blindsides us with the turn it takes right at the end."

The Fog

Stars Tom Welling, Maggie Grace, Selma Blair
Directed by Rupert Wainwright

A remake of John Carpenter's 1980 potboiler, this chiller revisits a tranquil coastal town terrorized by specters hiding in a cloak of "nasty, soupy fog." The ghosts are exacting revenge on the townspeople, descendants of the "murderers" who caused a clipper ship to sink a century ago. Owen Gleiberman glibly states: "Carpenter has co-produced a remake that actually manages to be even more inertly inept than the original . . . There's a ramshackle, anything-goes desperation to the effects." Frank Scheck sums it up: "Murky. . . Add one more to the list of unnecessary horror remakes . . . [The] director fails to bring any style to the material . . ."

An Unfinished Life

Stars Robert Redford, Morgan Freeman, Jennifer Lopez
Directed by Lasse Hallstrom

This "Wyoming-set weepie" finds an unlikely hero in a grizzled rancher (Redford) whose world is turned upside down when his daughter-in-law (Lopez) moves in with him, along with the granddaughter he never knew he had. Did we mention that he blames her for the death of his son? Wesley Morris of the Boston Globe thinks "it has all the ingredients for a revenge Western, yet none of the teeth . . . But neither Hallstrom nor much of the cast puts much grit or conviction [into it] . . ." Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times decides "it's not as damaged as might be imagined given the months it spent on the Miramax shelf . . . It's an acceptable film, but the story of family ties and forgiveness simply cannot manage the emotional connections it is desperate for."

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KRISTINE Hermosa would rather discuss her new movie. JM GUIAO PUNZALAN

What annulment are you talking about?

By Nini Valera

ABS-CBN STAR KRISTINE HERmosa refused to talk about the annulment of her marriage to Diether Ocampo during a one-on-one with INQUIRER Entertainment on Saturday at the press conference of her movie, "Enteng Kabisote... The Legend Continues."

"What annulment are you talking about?" she asked.

She would not confirm, either, that she and Diether were no longer together, even as tabloids are reporting that their breakup was just another gimmick.

It took Vic Sotto, Kristine's co-star, to rescue her from the awkward moment.

"We are not in the position to comment about that," Vic said jokingly, referring to the annulment issue. "Let's just talk about the movie."

Kristine became more animated when she talked about the stunts she did for the fantasy film, where she reprised the role of the fairy Faye (played in the '80s sitcom by Alice Dixson), wife of the mortal Enteng (Sotto).

"This is an action movie," said Kristine. "I did all the stunts. The action scenes were very difficult, but I enjoyed them thoroughly. Now, I want to be an action star."

Vic chimed in: "I'm pulling her away from drama."

Another tense moment occurred for Kristine during the press con when Pauleen Luna, the starlet that was earlier linked to Diether, was announced as one of the movie's cast members, too.

Again, Vic came to the rescue, denying that Pauleen was in the movie.

This was almost instantly clarified by publicist Aster Amoyo who said Pauleen had been in the original lineup. Amoyo did not explain why the young actress was dropped from the cast.

"Enteng Kabisote" is one of three films courting the children's market in the Metro Manila Film Festival in December.

Last year, Vic's "Enteng Kabisote: Okay Ka, Fairy Ko...The Legend," was the festival top grosser with a total take of P250 million.

Film as 'prayer' for peace

LOS ANGELES—DIrector Steven Spielberg said his new film "Munich," the story of Israel's revenge for the killing of its athletes by Palestinian guerrillas at the 1972 Olympics, is "a prayer for peace."

Leaders of Jewish and Muslim groups as well as diplomats and foreign policy experts will preview the film before its Dec. 23 US opening.

Time magazine said its interview was the only one that the Oscar winner planned to do before the release of the film. Eleven Israeli athletes, five kidnappers and one German policeman were killed in the incident.

The enemy

"Somewhere inside all this intransigence, there has to be a prayer for peace," Spielberg told Time.

The director said he was set to buy 250 video cameras and give these to Israeli and Palestinian children so that they can make movies about their lives.

"Just little documentaries about who they are and what they believe in, where they go to school, what they eat...," Spielberg said. The children will then exchange videos with one another. "That kind of thing can be effective, I think, in making people understand that there aren't many differences that divide Israelis and Palestinians. Not as human beings anyway."

Reuters

DID YOU KNOW...

LONDON—**Sean Connery** says British actor **Daniel Craig** is a "terrific choice" for the sixth incarnation of superspy James Bond on film. "It's a completely new departure," said Connery, 75, in a BBC television interview. Craig is 37.

AFP

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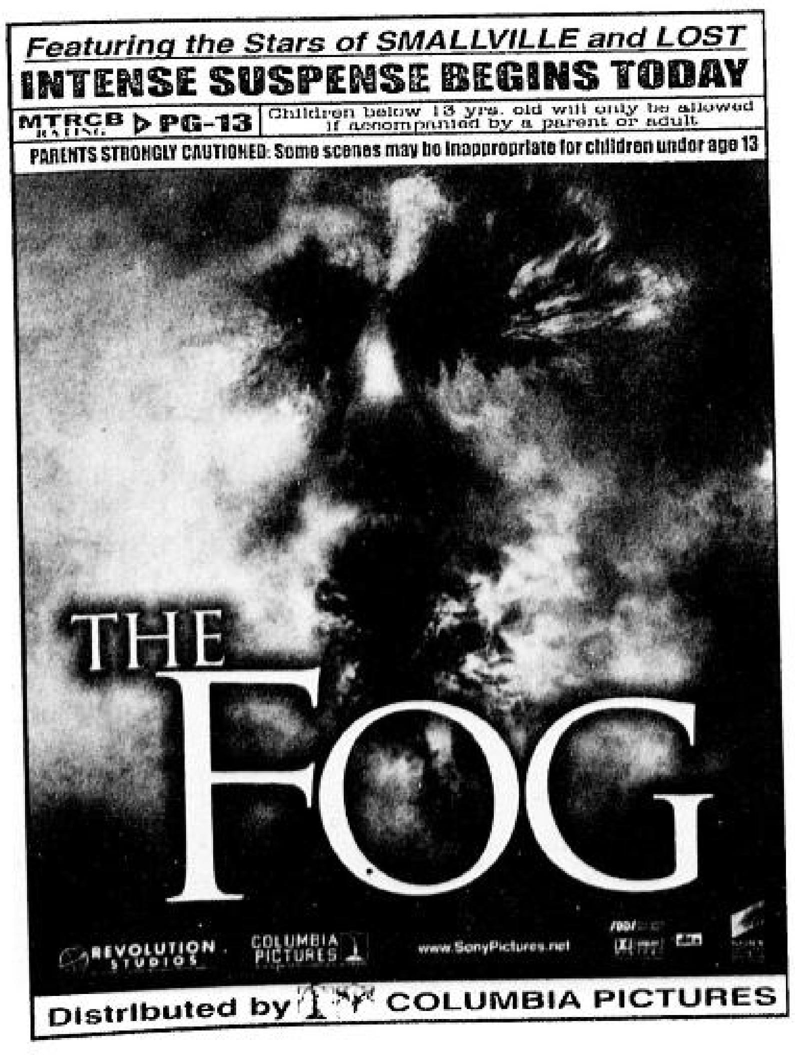

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No apology, no regrets

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

"THAT WAS A MATTER OF PROCEDURE," Laurice Guillen, filmmaker and former head of the Film Development Council of the Philippines, told INQUIRER Entertainment. "It was not necessary to make an appointment [with me]."

What she found objectionable was that Vic del Rosario, presidential consultant for entertainment, failed to follow the process.

Guillen elaborated: "Usually, after the President signs an appointment and it is transmitted by the Executive Secretary, the Presidential Management Staff (PMS) informs whoever needs to be informed. Nobody informed me."

She confirmed that Del Rosario and Rolando "Jackie" Atienza, her replacement at FDCP, had called to set an appointment before the Cinemanila launch last October. "We got to schedule a meeting after the Cinemanila launch," Guillen said.

At the launch, however, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza announced that she had been replaced. Prior to that, Guillen recalled, she got calls from Jackie, asking for the FDCP's financial records. "I told him that I needed ... instructions from Malacañang."

No seal

When she received the instructions after the Cinemanila opening, it was in a letter "written on Malacañang stationery, signed by Vic del Rosario." It came with photocopies of Jackie's appointment papers, she said, but Del Rosario's letter didn't bear the Malacañang seal. "That was when I found out that [Jackie] was appointed FDCP head on Sept. 22."

She added that she initially thought the end of her term was Nov. 11.

Since the Cinemanila incident, she said, she has received an apologetic call from the President and had a "frank and courteous" meeting with "the people from the Search Committee (part of the PMS and under the Office of the President)."

She said she has no regrets because "I gave my best. We have remitted P84 million to the producers [from the Cinema Evaluation Board] and we still have P28 million in our special fund."

She said, she agreed to be interviewed so that the oversight would not be repeated. "This is how to disappoint the good people you want recruit into government service."

'Boss Vic' ...

From page A2-1

NTC monitor radio stations."

He added: "Here in the Philippines, listeners tend to support foreign music. Local products have to be protected. The creation of an all-OPM radio station is one way of promoting our own products."

Del Rosario was referring to a directive from Government Mass Media Group head Cerge Remonde to transform a government-owned radio network, known for airing American ballads or standards, into an all-OPM station.

Del Rosario has been the subject of several news articles this week in connection with his involvement in the conversion of (government radio) dwBR into an all-OPM station. "Getting positive and negative reactions from people is part of my job as a government personnel," he pointed out.

He added: "Other countries are already protecting their local music. If you're an all-jazz station, you could play songs of known jazz performers like Annie Brazil, Jacqui Magno and Richard Merk. If your station is known for playing folk music, you could air songs by Freddie Aguilar, Sampaguita or Asin.

"If these songs are given ample airplay, *dadami ang produkto*," he pointed out. "This happened in the 1970s. We were able to create music for all genres because our songs enjoyed equal [with foreign recordings] airtime."

Gov't serious now: ...

From page A2-1

peated violations."

Even so, the music industry is deep in debate as to whether radio stations should play more OPM.

Opposition

Presidential consultant on entertainment Vic del Rosario is lobbying to convert state-owned dwBR into an all-OPM radio station. The suggestion has been vigorously opposed.

Vic Milan, a dwBR broadcaster, pointed out: "Because the [recommendation] comes from Vic del Rosario, who has his own record company [as head of Viva Entertainment], the motive becomes suspect."

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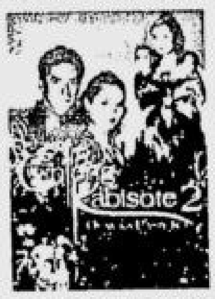

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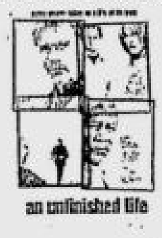
EXODUS: TALES FROM THE ENCHANTED KINGDOM
Dec. 22 • Megamall • Cinema 9 & 10
BLUE MOON
Dec. 23 • Megamall • Cinema 10
MULAWIN
Dec. 23 • North Edsa • Cinema 1 & 2

BE THE FIRST TO WATCH



① An Unfinished Life

② In Her Shoes

③ The Fog

LOOK WHO'S WATCHING AT SM MANILA?

CHICKEN LITTLE
Chicken Little life size figure now on display at SM Manila
NOW SHOWING

GUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 IN HER SHOES
12:35FS/01:05MF/03:40/06:15
08:20LFS/09:00LMF/11:05END
2 THE FOG
11:45FS/12:15MF/02:25/04:35/06:45
08:25LFS/09:00LMF/10:40END
MEGAMALL
1 THE FOG
10:40FS/11:10MS/01:20/03:30/05:40
07:50/09:30LFS/10:00LMF/11:40END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 RESERVED
2 THE FOG
12:00FS/12:10MF/02:00/03:54/05:46
07:38/09:17LFS/09:30LMF/11:10END
3 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE
12:00FS/12:15MF/03:20/06:25
09:05LFS/09:30LMF/12:10END

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 THE FOG
2 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
5 THE MYTH
6 IN HER SHOES
7 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
8 HARI NG SABLAY
9 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
10 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
11 FLIGHTPLAN
12 THE MAN

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 IN HER SHOES
5 THE FOG
6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
7 THE MYTH
8 HARI NG SABLAY
9 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
10 CHICKEN LITTLE

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 THE FOG
2 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM VALENZUELA NOW OPEN
1 THE FOG
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 MERRY CHRISTMAS
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 THE MYTH
6 HARI NG SABLAY
7 THE FOG
8 CHICKEN LITTLE
9 IN HER SHOES
10 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
11 THE MAN
12 PRIME

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 THE FOG
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 IN HER SHOES
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
7 THE MAN
8 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
9 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
10 HARI NG SABLAY

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 HARI NG SABLAY
2 THE FOG
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 IN HER SHOES

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 THE FOG
2 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
5 THE MAN
6 CHICKEN LITTLE
7 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
8 IN HER SHOES

SM CITY MANILA
1 THE FOG
2 IN HER SHOES
3 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 CHICKEN LITTLE
6 BLOODFIST 2050: THE LEGEND CONTINUES
7 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
8 THE MAN
9 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
10 PRIME
11 HARI NG SABLAY
12 MERRY CHRISTMAS

SM CINEMA SAN LAZARO
1 THE FOG
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 IN HER SHOES
4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
5 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
6 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

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LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
3 THE FOG
4 APRIL SNOW
5 THE MYTH
6 HARI NG SABLAY

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 THE FOG
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 THE MAN

SM MOLINO NOW OPEN
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 THE MAN
4 HARI NG SABLAY

SM CITY BACOOR
1 IN HER SHOES
2 THE MYTH
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
5 THE FOG
6 HARI NG SABLAY
7 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
8 JUST LIKE HEAVEN

SM CITY MARILAO
1 FOUR BROTHERS
2 HARI NG SABLAY
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 THE FOG

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS
1 THE FOG
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN

SM CITY LUCENA
1 THE MYTH
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 APRIL SNOW
4 HARI NG SABLAY

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
2 THE MYTH
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 CHICKEN LITTLE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 RESERVED
2 THE FOG
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 JUST LIKE HEAVENS
5 CHICKEN LITTLE
6 HARI NG SABLAY
7 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
8 DOMINO

SM CITY ILOILO
1 DOMINO
2 RESERVED
3 THE MYTH
4 CRY WOLF
5 THE FOG
6 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
7 RESERVED
8 CHICKEN LITTLE

SM CITY DAVAO
1 THE FOG
2 CRY WOLF
3 THE MAN
4 HARI NG SABLAY
5 THE MYTH
6 CHICKEN LITTLE

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 CHICKEN LITTLE
2 FOUR BROTHERS
3 THE MAN
4 THE MYTH

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

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1 IN HER SHOES
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30
GP
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00
GP
4 THE FOG

POWER PLANT CINEMA
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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX

CHICKEN LITTLE GP	IN HER SHOES PG13	AN UNFINISHED LIFE PG13
THE FOG PG13	HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE GP PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS PG13	JUST LIKE HEAVEN GP

SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898 1440-41.

SHANG CINEPLEX
① CHICKEN LITTLE
MTRCB. GP
② THE FOG
MTRCB. PG-13
③ UNFINISHED LIFE
MTRCB. PG-13
④ IN HER SHOES
MTRCB. PG-13
PREMIERE THEATRE JUST LIKE HEAVEN
MTRCB GP
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice
Catch the Cineplex Special
For Every Single Purchase Of 3 Tickets to " Chicken Little " Get A 20% Off Discount Coupon From Fish & Co. And A Chance To Win Fish & Co. Premium Items.
See Posters For Details DTI NCR Permit No A-1003 Series Of 2005
Regular Ticket Price
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CINEMA 2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN PG13
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CINEMA 3 UNFINISHED LIFE PG13
CINEMA 4 THE FOG PG13
CINEMA 5 IN HER SHOES PG13
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.
MUSIC MUSEUM December 10, 2005 CUESHE 8PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

Araneta Center Leisure Guide
CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway CINEPLEX 10
LEVEL 4, GATEWAY MALL
ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P140 HARRY POTTER
GLOBE PLATINUM P249 / P299
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

IN HER SHOES 1:05 / 3:55 / 6:45 / 9:35	GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA IN HER SHOES 12:30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00
THE FOG 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40	CHICKEN LITTLE 12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30
KISNA 1:00 / 6:30 MERRY CHRISTMAS 4:10 / 9:40	JUST LIKE HEAVEN 12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20
UNFINISHED LIFE 12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30	EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40
...MAXIMO OLIVEROS 12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20	HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12:40 / 3:40 / 6:40 / 9:40

ALI MALL CINEMAS

❶ THE FOG 12:10 R4 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30	❹ THE MYTH 12:20 / 3:05 / 5:50 / 8:35
❷ HARI NG SABLAY 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00	❺ HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET 12:00 R3 / 2:20 / 4:20 / 6:20 / 8:20
❸ ...MAXIMO OLIVEROS 12 05 R3/ 1 45 / 3 55 / 6 05 / 8 15	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
ATENEO - LA SALLE DREAM GAMES '05
Dec 8 Thu LEGENDS GAME 4:30 pm DREAM GAME 7pm
URCC - THE ART OF WAR
December 10 Saturday 8 00 pm
LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

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635-5555
FOR ALL BRANCHES

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA 632-9118

1 HARRY POTTER 4• THX
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
3 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
4 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
5 THE FOG
6 IN HER SHOES
7 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
8 CHICKEN LITTLE
9 THE MYTH
10 BILOG / CIRCLES

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 THE FOG
2 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
3 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 CHICKEN LITTLE
5 IN HER SHOES
6 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
7 JUST LIKE HEAVEN

METRO EAST 682-8193 / 682-8199

1 CHICKEN LITTLE
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
5 IN HER SHOES
6 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
7 THE FOG
8 THE MYTH

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3228-30

1 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
5 IN HER SHOES
6 THE FOG

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 HARI NG SABLAY
2 THE MYTH
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 THE FOG
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 IN HER SHOES

CHECK THIS OUT ▸▸

ROBINSONS CINEMAS
Novaliches
Now oPen!

Cinema 1 HARRY POTTER 4
Cinema 2 CHICKEN LITTLE
Cinema 3 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
Cinema 4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
Cinema 5 IN HER SHOES
Cinema 6 THE FOG

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 THE FOG
2 HARI NG SABLAY
3 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
4 THE DESCENT
5 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 THE MYTH
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
5 DOOM

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2126 (046) 416-4332

1 THE FOG
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 PRIME
5 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 THE FOG
2 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
4 HARI NG SABLAY

IMUS (046) 876-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 THE FOG
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 CHICKEN LITTLE
5 THE MYTH
6 PRIME

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 CHICKEN LITTLE
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 APRIL SNOW
4 PRIME
5 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
6 THE FOG

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 THE FOG
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 THE MYTH
5 HARI NG SABLAY
6 PRIME

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 THE FOG
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 THE MYTH
5 CRY_WOLF

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At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Hyundai Car Exhibit December 5 to 7, 2005	Holiday Table Setting December 2 to 18, 2005 Acoustic Chiristmas Serenade w/ Chedi December 2, 9, 16	Pasko Sa Mt. Sinai December 7, 2005

AYALA GREENBELT

Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra Christmas Show
December 2 to 4 & 9 to 11 2005, GB 3 Park - 8PM
Christmas Fireworks Display
December 2 to 4 & 9 to 11 2005, GB 3 Park - 9PM

GREENBELT 1 Onstage AYALA CENTER

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AYALA CINEMAS

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Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729 7777

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1 GLORIETTA 1	JUST LIKE HEAVEN	HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS	JUST LIKE HEAVEN			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE	JUST LIKE HEAVEN	THX JUST LIKE HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS	PRIME	THE MYTH	CHICKEN LITTLE	HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE 11:30, 2:40, 5:50, 9:00	JUST LIKE HEAVEN 12:10, 2:15, 4:20, 6:25, 8:30					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	THX JUST LIKE HEAVEN 2:50, 4:55, 7:00, 9:05, 11:10 GUARANTEED SEATS	THX EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE 1:30, 4:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	DEEP BLUE 2:50, 4:45, 6:40, 8:35, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	HARRY POTTER 4 1:30, 4:40, 7:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	CHICKEN LITTLE 1:20, 3:10, 5:00, 6:50, 8:40, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX JUST LIKE HEAVEN	CHICKEN LITTLE	HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE	CHICKEN LITTLE		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	JUST LIKE HEAVEN	CHICKEN LITTLE	ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS	HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE			

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— Pete Hammond, MAXIM MAGAZINE

"AN OFF THE WALL WINNER."
— Stephen Mosalem, INTERVIEW MAGAZINE

AYALA CINEMAS

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

Customer Service text hotline: Customer Service text hotline:	0917 6095900 Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 8pm Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 12mn
Alabang Town Center - Ayala Center Cebu -	842 2782; from 10am to 8pm (032) 231 5342 loc 324

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② Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire
③ Chicken Little
④ Hari ng Sablay
⑤ Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros

EVENTS! EVENTS!

MARKET! MARKET!
The fun is in the finds

Holiday Fireworks Show

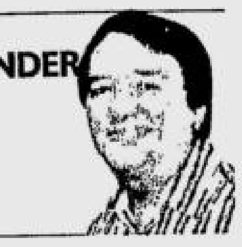
November 20, 27
December 4, 11, 18 and 25,
7 pm at the Playzone

Market! Market! Simbang Gabi
at the 5th level lobby
Dec. 15 - 23, 6:30 pm

ENTERTAINMENT

Resort person, chance opportunity and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

HOST: HOW CAN THE GOVERNment generate more money next year?

Guest: There are many ways, but one important is to improve the touristic industry! (Just pretend we never asked you, OK?)

***

Host: Is (name of celebrity) a member of your group's organizing committee?

Guest: No, but we may invite him as a resort person. (*Ay*, a resort person!)

***

Host: How did you end up making so much money in your new venture?

Guest: Well, I guess by luck. It was a chance opportunity we saw and grabbed it! (*Ano daw?*)

***

Host: What's your favorite cuisine?

Guest: Oh, I love Filipino food—like pancit and lumpiang shanghai! (Ah, so!)

***

Host: What's your reaction to all the nasty rumors spread against you by your rival?

Guest: I don't really pay attention—it's, what do you call, a lot of boo-ha-ha? (No, that's *not* what you call it!)

***

Host: Did you direct the sex comedy play?

Guest: Well, I helped conceptualize it, but no, I had nothing to do with it directorilly. (*Ay*, directorilly!)

***

Host: How do you make this marinade taste so good?

Guest: All you need to do is, *ipahiga ang isang kalamansi*. (*Ano daw?*)

***

Host: What did you do during the huge traffic jam?

Guest: I left my car and rode a public! (No comment.)

***

Host: Why is the country's political situation so bad these days?

Guest: *Siguro, lahat ng ito ay gawain ng mga taong* hunger for power.

(Ah, please repeat?)

***

Host: How do you apply a coat of paint so that it's smooth when it dries?

Guest: You just try to keep it stable so it doesn't dwarf? (Dwarf? What dwarf?—Oh, *warp!*)

***

Host: You're being attacked left and right these days—honestly, how do you feel?

Guest: Honestly, I'm already repainting why I became a government official! ("Repaint" all you want, it comes with the territory!)

***

Host: Why is saying "I'm sorry" so important in a troubled relationship?

Guest: Because, once you say you're sorry, that means you have a regret! (Brilliant insight—duh?)

***

Host: Was your father religious?

Guest: Not before—but later, *naconvert siya sa Katolasismo*. (*Katol—ano?!*)

***

Host: What animals would you like the Manila Zoo to acquire and why?

Guest: *Sana*, giant panda. I hear giant pandas are really rare as far as their breathing goes! (What are you talking about?!)

'LAGI NA LANG AKO'

Turns out, BJ "Tolits" Forbes , 7, wants his clothes not only clean, but fashionable, too. He has a new endorsement deal—with the kiddie fashion brand Moose Gear—following the laundry soap commercials that made him famous in a total of 11 versions.

ROUNDUP

'Harry Potter' keeps magic alive

LOS ANGELES—The third weekend was still a charm for "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," which remained the top movie with $20.45 million.

Charlize Theron's sci-fi tale "Aeon Flux," a movie apparently so bad distributor Paramount did not screen it beforehand for critics, still managed to debut in second place with $13.1 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The Johnny Cash chronicle "Walk the Line," from Century Fox, was in No. 3 with $10 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at US and Canadian theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations, official box-office tracker:

AP

1) "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," $20.45M
2) "Aeon Flux," $13.1M
3) "Walk the Line," $10M
4) "Yours, Mine & Ours," $8.4M
5) "Just Friends," $5.9M
6) "Pride & Prejudice," $4.62M
7) "Rent," $4.6M
8) "Chicken Little," $4.5M
9) "Derailed," $2.4M
10) "In the Mix," $1.9M.

MTRCB warns 'Sis'

THE MOVIE and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) has warned GMA 7's morning variety show, "Sis," for airing objectionable scenes on its Nov. 22 episode.

In a memorandum dated Dec. 1, MTRCB Chief Marissa Laguardia said the warning was prompted by a complaint she received from two Monitoring and Inspection Unit (MIU) special agents, who said the outfit of guest performer, Andrea del Rosario, "almost exposed her breast."

Laguardia told GMA 7 Program Management Head Jose Mari Abacan to "remind your artists/guests to wear appropriate attire because the program [has] a morning prime time slot."

Marinel R. Cruz

Stars in trouble

POUGHKEEPSIE, New York—A jury has ruled that actor Matthew Modine doesn't have to pay for damages to a neighbor's property from a fire he started outside his Hudson Valley, New York, home.

Modine, who sold the house last year, said he started the fire in April 2003 to clear brush on his property.

Nigel and Julia Widdowson were seeking $43,000 for damage to more than 100 trees on their wooded estate in Millbrook, New York.

In Brussles, a little-known Belgian songwriter won a plagiarism case against Madonna, leading a local court to ban the singer's song, "Frozen," from sale or broadcast in the country.

Songwriter Salvatore Acquaviva said Madonna's 1998 hit resembled the French-language song she wrote in 1993, "Ma Vie Fout Le Camp."

AP

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November inflation rises to 7.1%

As prices of food, services go up

By Michelle V. Remo

CONSUMER PRICES JUMPED 7.1 PERCENT IN November from year-ago levels, buoyed largely by increases in the cost of food and services, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

This brought the 11-month average increase in consumer prices to 7.7 percent, safely within the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' full-year inflation forecast of 7.9 percent.

The November inflation figure also settled at the high-end of the 6.7- to 7.1-percent projection of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) for the month.

"Higher production costs of packaging materials raised prices of canned fish. In addition, prices of processed fish and selected seafood were generally up in most of the regions including NCR as the Christmas season come near," Neda Director General Augusto Santos said in a statement.

The Neda estimated that average inflation for the whole year would reach 7.7 percent, taking into account recent increases in fuel prices and transport fares, and the implementation of the VAT Reform Law.

The new VAT law, which took effect Nov. 1, expanded the coverage of the tax to include, among others, oil and electricity, and will raise the tax rate from 10 to 12 percent in February next year. The increase in the VAT rate next year is expected to push inflation higher than this year's.

Compared with prices the previous month, November prices were higher by 0.8 percent. The month-on-month increase in prices was partly due to the higher cost of oil and electricity.

Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) raised its rates by 65 centavos a kilowatt-hour last month. Prices of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), kerosene, gasoline, diesel and engine oil were also raised last month.

The Neda official noted that as of Nov. 24, domestic pump prices increased by 1.8 percent to an average of P33.50 a liter from the previous month's P32.90.

Although oil prices jumped, Santos

NOVEMBER/ B2

PAL PRESIDENT and COO Jimmy Bautista, PAL vice chair and treasurer Mariano Tanenglian, sign the purchase agreement with Airbus, represented by its senior VP for customer affairs-Asia, Paul Kiteley.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

PAL acquiring 18 Airbus jets in major refleeting move

By Clarissa S. Batino

ASIA'S OLDEST CARRIER PHILIPPINE AIRlines yesterday launched an $840-million, three-year fleet upgrade involving the purchase of nine aircraft and the lease of four planes from Airbus to expand its domestic and regional operations.

The package includes a firm order for nine brand-new A320 jets and options for five more new A320s. In addition to the 14 aircraft covered by the Airbus deal, PAL will also lease two brand-new A320s and two A319s from GE Commercial Aviation Services, the world's largest aircraft lessor.

PAL vice chair and treasurer Mariano Tanenglian signed for the flag carrier while Airbus senior vice president for customer affairs-Asia Paul Kiteley represented the European airplane manufacturer.

PAL president Jaime Bautista said the fleet upgrade would improve the company's on-time performance, boost its image and allow it to fly to more domestic and regional routes.

He said flights to India, for instance, would be launched next year and expanding operations in Japan and China were also being reviewed.

Fuel and maintenance costs, which accounts for more than 40 percent of overhead, should become less of a factor in operations, he added.

Savings from fuel and operations, he said, should offset the costs of paying for the new aircraft. PAL's fuel factor is now at more than 30 percent against only 17 percent before world crude prices started going up.

"With the new planes, PAL will serve its customers even more better, allow us to offer competitive rates and make our fleet one of the youngest in the region," Bautista said.

Newer planes, he added, would allow a

PAL/ B2

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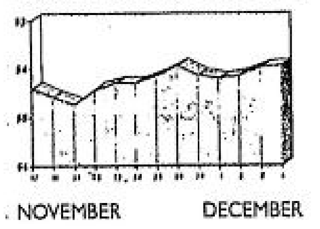

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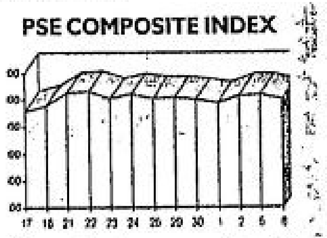

(See stock market report on Page B7)

SHARE PRICES closed 0.81-percent lower yesterday on a pick-up in political tensions and higher-than-expected inflation in November, dealers said.

They said concern was raised over the appearance in Congress today of former Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano who the opposition accuses of conniving with President Macapagal-Arroyo to steal last year's election.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 17.15 points to 2,099.15 after trading between 2,086.77 and 2,116.30.

Volumes reached 473.2 million shares worth P1.06 billion. Losers outnumbered gainers 56 to 18 and 52 stocks were unchanged.

The broader all-shares index fell 8.84 points to 1,270.32.

SHARES/ B3

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New Zealand commits ODA assistance until 2009

Focus on public governance, socio-economic environment

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW Zealand has disclosed its plan to provide official development assistance to the Philippines for another three years, saying it intended to help the latter achieve the goal of improving public governance and socio-economic environment.

The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) said in a statement that the New Zealand government has already initiated talks with local officials for the redirection of the NZAID country program for the Philippines for 2006 to 2009.

NZAID, or the New Zealand Agency for International Development, wants to center its assistance for the Philippines on projects and programs that will cater to capacity building for local government units, education, indigenous people, forestry, resource management, human rights and gender equality, among others.

"The program will also focus on NZAID's interventions on a modest number of geographic regions to facilitate the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of delivery and monitoring," said NZAID Director Dan Clarke.

He added that provinces located within the Cordillera Autonomous Region and Mindanao would be among the intended beneficiaries of the ODA programs and projects.

The amount of the intended ODA support will be determined after discussions between Philippine and New Zealand representatives are completed.

But for fiscal year 2005-2006, New Zealand's ODA allocation for the Philippines reached $2.72 million (about P150 million), or slightly higher than the previous fiscal year's $2.29 million (about P126 million).

"We hope this will be the continuation of a good partnership between the two countries. Neda shall continue to work closely with NZAID in translating the increase into tangible activities supportive of our Country Program Strategy," said Neda Assistant Director General Rolando Tungpalan.

NZAID is the agency responsible for managing New Zealand's official development assistance for various countries. Its assistance is usually geared toward the goals of poverty alleviation, equitable economic development, provision of basic needs, and establishment of sustainable livelihood.

PAL acquiring 18 Airbus jets . . .

From page B1

faster turnaround time that was essential in improving PAL's schedule.

The refleeting is PAL's first since 1996 and will be its biggest investment since the company began a 10-year debt rehabilitation in 1999 over its $2.2 billion in obligations. The flag carrier's debts are now down to $1.1 billion.

The A-320s will seat 114 in the economy class and 12 in business class while the A-319s will have 126 economy seats and eight business class seats.

PAL's senior vice president and chief finance officer Andrew Huang said the company would finance the acquisition with a combination of internal funds and new debts.

Existing creditors such as the export-import banks of the United Kingdom, Germany and France have agreed to extend new loans to PAL for this round of refleeting. Foreign and local commercial lenders are also offering new credit lines.

The $840-million cost cited by PAL was based on the list price, which included the five options. List prices are usually much more than the actual purchase costs.

PAL's closest competitor, Cebu Air Pacific, has started its three-year refleeting also with Airbus 320s and 319s.

Huang said PAL had remained the dominant player in the country and was either first, second or third in all the markets where it operates.

Cesar Chiong, PAL senior assistant vice president, said that two planes would be arriving in 2006, six in 2007 and five in 2008. Should the flag carrier exercise its option to buy five more, these planes will be arriving from 2009 to 2012.

Bautista said a leased Airbus aircraft would arrive next week as part of the total upgrading of its narrow-bodied fleet. PAL currently has 14 aircraft—seven A320s, four Boeing 737-300s and three Boeing 737-400s—serving domestic and regional routes.

PAL wants an all-Airbus fleet by the end of 2008 when all existing leases shall have matured.

Bautista said having a single brand of aircraft would be more efficient and generate savings for the company.

Huang said PAL was looking at a healthier bottomline once the fleet upgrade has been completed.

The flag carrier reported a $4.5-million net loss in the second quarter (July-September 2005) of its fiscal year ending March 2006.

In the first quarter (April-June 2005), it registered a net income of $27.5 million. With the second quarter losses, PAL's first-half earnings stood at $23 million.

November inflation rises . . .

From page B1

noted that the increase was just minimal compared with the 10-percent VAT rate. Oil prices did not increase by 10 percent, despite the 10-percent VAT rate, because of mitigating measures such as the lowering tariffs on imported oil and a cut in the excise tax rates of oil products.

A sustained improvement in fuel prices and the peso-dollar exchange rate would also temper inflationary pressures from the VAT, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

But despite this favorable trend, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the central monetary authority would continue to exercise caution in monetary management given continuing threats to inflation.

"We will continue to watch out for any adverse shifts in expectations and second round effects as a result of these price developments," Tetangco said.

Tetangco said pressures from the VAT and other shocks "could be muted by easing fuel prices and the appreciation of the peso especially if these favorable price trends are sustained."

The BSP chief expects the local currency to trade between 53 and 55 against the dollar next year.

Some analysts said the BSP might raise interest rates for the fourth time this year at this month's policy meeting with high oil prices likely to persist next year.

The inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee expects oil prices to stay high at $56 to $60 a barrel.

With a report from Doris Dumlao

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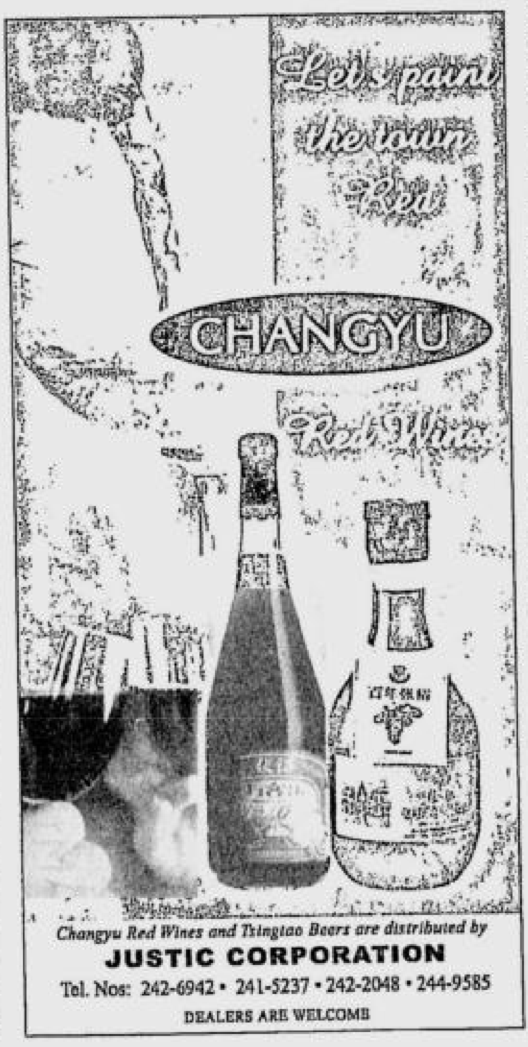

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2 units	Computer for data receiving workstation @ P 80,000.00	P 160,000.00	Ninety (90) Calendar days	Seven (7) working days
2 units	Computer for data processing and display workstation @ P 80,000.00	P 160,000.00	Ninety (90) Calendar days	Seven (7) working days

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

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The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities		Schedule/Time	Venue
1.	Issuance of Bid Requirements & Bidding Documents	November 29 to December 12, 2005	General Services Section 3/F PAGASA Central Office Bldg.
2.	Pre-Bid Conference	December 13, 2005 / 2:00 p.m.	Amihan Conference Room 2/F PAGASA Central Office Bldg.
3	Opening of Eligibility Requirements	December 26, 2005 / 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	
	Opening of Bids - Envelope I and II	December 26, 2005 / 2:00 p.m.	
4.	Bid Evaluation & Post-qualification	December 27, 2005 - January 3, 2006	
5.	Notice of Award	January 10, 2006	

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ICTSI, ATI each want slice of N. Harbor

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE COUNTRY'S TWO BIGGEST PORT OPerators, International Container Terminal Services Inc. and Asian Terminals Inc., want to participate in the privatization of the North Harbor, which is expected to take place in the first quarter of 2006, a maritime official said.

The board of the Philippine Ports Authority will meet this week to study the terms of reference for the planned privatization of North Harbor, said Raul Santos, assistant to the PPA general manager.

Santos said that the PPA has not received a formal offer from either ICTSI or ATI because the terms of reference have yet to be disclosed. But he said he had talked to the two parties and both had expressed their interest.

The PPA official refused to say whether the agency would bid out just one concession for a single operator, as originally planned, or if it would allow several operators to operate three different terminals.

The privatization of North Harbor was first mapped out in 1999, but the proposal actually dated back to the Aquino administration.

It was recommended that a single concession should be up for bid to attract big investors.

ICTSI and ATI had planned to pool their resources and, together, bid for the project due to the massive investment needed.

But the business community wanted more terminals to be auctioned off. It urged the agency not to allow a single port operator. The issue had dogged the planned sale for years.

Recently, the PPA gave in to the clamor of the business community to allow more operators to run the port.

According to sources, the PPA is now inclined to bid out several terminals instead of one.

ATI and ICTSI are engaged in the handling of container and bulk cargoes. They operate in the Port of Manila, the country's biggest port where most foreign ships dock.

Cargo handling consists of stevedoring, arrastre or cargo handling work on dock, and the off-dock cost of shipping lines or container operators that use container yards far from the port.

AUB sees ₱600-M profit in 2005

By Doris C. Dumlao

MEDIUM-SIZED LENDER ASIA UNITED BANK is expected to post P600 million in net profit this year, about 37 percent better than the P437 million registered a year ago.

AUB president Abraham Co said the bank was aiming to net another P600 million next year, with consumer lending seen to remain the main growth driver.

He said there was no urgent need for the bank to raise capital at present. The bank had a capital base of P4.6 billion as of Sept. 30, equivalent to a capital adequacy ratio of 26.8 percent or more than double the regulatory requirement of 10 percent.

The bank posted a net income of P519 million for the first nine months of the year, up by 70 percent from year-ago level. This is equivalent to an annualized return on equity of 14 percent.

Total operating income from January to September improved by 35 percent to P1.7 billion while net interest margin rose by 13 percent to P805 million from P709 million.

Operating expenses amounted to P443 million or 18 percent better than the P375-million level a year ago.

The bank's total assets stood at P22.6 billion or 25 percent up from last year's P17.7 billion. Total deposits likewise grew by 27 percent to P17.5 billion over a year ago.

The bank's non-performing loan ratio improved further to 8.12 percent compared to the previous year's ratio of 9.72 percent.

Shares close . . .

From page B1

"Garcillano's re-emergence could see political noise once again build up," JP Morgan said in a note to clients, warning that "the President's political support has diminished over the course of the past few months and there is growing sense that this erosion is expected to continue."

Investors were also worried about the announcement by the National Statistics Office that the consumer price index rose 7.1 percent year-on-year in November, exceeding forecasts of the central bank.

"High inflation also raises fears of a looming interest rate increase, which is a dampener for the equities market because this would mean higher borrowing rates and limited expansion for companies," said Jonathan Ravelas of Banco de Oro Universal Bank.

Most actively traded Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. fell P10 to P1,765. *AFP*

Taipannic tangle

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

LUCIO TAN IS DEFINITELY NOT rolling over and allow fellow taipan John Gokongwei Jr. have his airline for breakfast. Tan's Philippine Airlines yesterday signed an agreement with Airbus to acquire up to 18 A320 planes, the same jets that Gokongwei's Cebu Pacific is now gradually deploying in its aim to seize majority market share from PAL by 2009.

"It's a dream. Everybody dreams," a confident PAL president Jaime Bautista said, when asked about Cebu Pacific's drive for pole position.

"With the refleeting, PAL would not only become Asia's oldest airline, but will have one of the youngest fleet as well."

Tan himself was not present yesterday—the taipan was said to be in China trying to win more business from his land of birth—but his brother, PAL vice chair/treasurer Mariano Tanenglian, signed for the $840-million deal, witnessed by Tan's two sons, Lucio Jr. and Michael.

According to the grapevine, PAL will put in no less than 15 percent of the $840 million for the new planes, with the rest to be financed by a consortium of European export agencies, the same creditor group that PAL still owes about $1.1 billion from its burst of Aquino and Ramos-era mix-matched refleeting.

As the Airbuses arrive, PAL would return the six Boeing 737s it leases, as well as sell the lone B737 it owns.

PAL's sister airline, the Cebu-based Air Philippines, will continue to be its budget carrier and counterfoil to the aggressive marketing tactics of Cebu Pacific. According to Bautista, Cebu Pacific has already shifted from being a no-frills, budget carrier to a low-cost carrier, with its introduction of meals in its flights.

Despite heavier avgas consumption, the five B737-200s of Air Philippines can compete with Cebu Pacific's new Airbuses because the Boeings have been leased at a much cheaper rate, Bautista said.

With employee complement now down to 7,400 employees and 31 aircraft, or a 239:1 ratio as against Cebu Pacific's 86:1 ratio, PAL will next streamline its West Coast operations by early 2006, when the flag carrier relocates its reservation, accounting and related back-office transactions to the Philippines. Bautista said PAL has higher personnel-aircraft ratio than Cebu Pacific since it also maintains a trans-Pacific fleet, in addition to flying to Australasian and Middle Eastern routes whose foreign offices require additional manpower and cabin complement.

In comparison, US budget carriers typically have 100:1 personnel-plane ratio, he added. Yesterday's signing was held in the Makati Shangri-La Quezon B function room, ironically the same venue where Cebu Pacific announced the Airbus acquisition.

Whereas the Cebu Pacific headtable was facing the other side of the room, PAL's was facing right straight to the door.

For feng shiu believers (which Gokongwei is not), go figure.

Heard through the grapevine

PHILIPPINE National Bank has asked the Supreme Court to censure former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez, after the Court of Appeals found the decorum-challenged lawyer thrice guilty of "contumacious" forum-shopping against a PNB foreclosure case.

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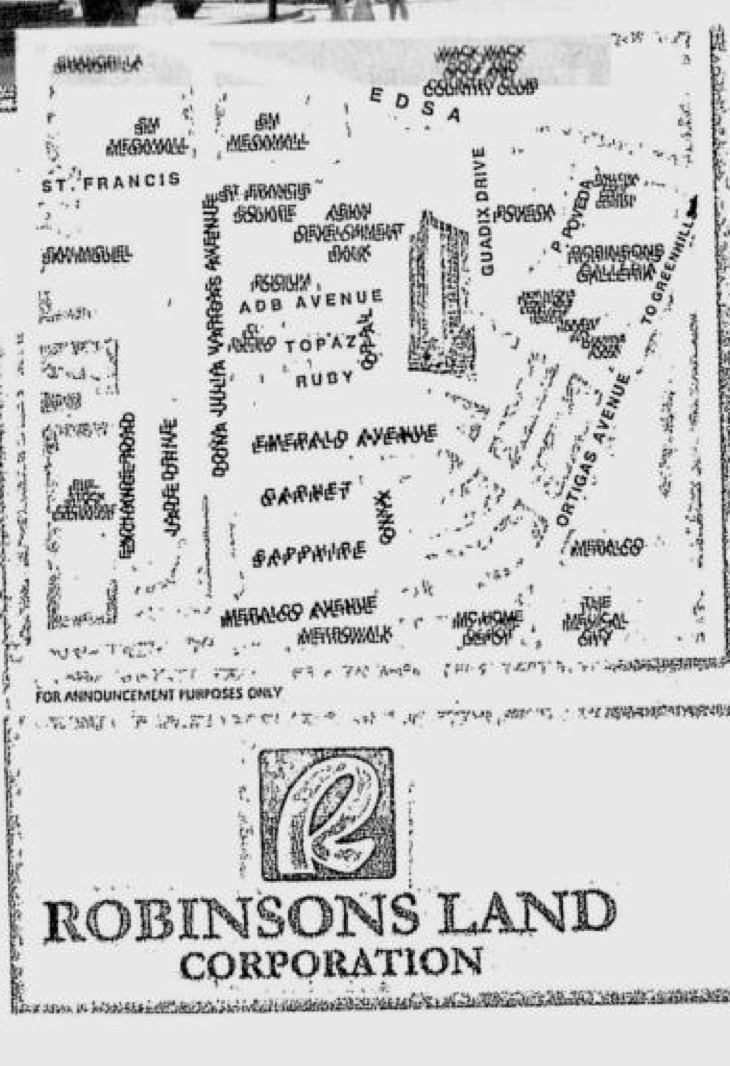

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9 groups keen on developing 16 wind sites

By Abigail L. Ho

NINE LOCAL AND FOREIGN FIRMS AND consortia have expressed interest in developing the 16 new wind sites that the Department of Energy is planning to auction off by end-March next year.

In a presentation during a wind energy conference yesterday, Energy Utilization Management Bureau director Mario Marasigan said these firms would have the first crack at the potential sites. If they could complete all the necessary requirements, their desired wind sites would no longer be included in the contracting round, Marasigan said.

The companies that have expressed interest in the potential sites included First Gen Renewables Inc. for sites in Bago City and Cauayan in Negros Occidental; Benguet Corp. for those in Allen-Lavesares and Calbayog City in Northern Samar and Nation Petroleum Corp. for those in Bani and Bolinao in Pangasinan and San Andres in Quezon.

The other interested parties are the Philippine National Oil Co. Energy Development Corp. for the Bantay, Ilocos Sur site; Trans-Asia Renewable Energy Corp. for the Mercedes, Camarines Norte wind area and Coastal Power Development Corp. for the Daet, Camarines Norte site.

A consortium-composed of Transnational Diversified Corp., Asia One Power Corp. and Cammon Windsolar Energy Inc.—is eyeing two wind sites: Carmen and Oslob, both in Cebu.

Transnational by itself is keen on developing three sites, including those in Pasuquin in Ilocos Norte, Maconacon in Isabela and Tagaytay in Cavite. Asia One is also eyeing a potential site in Siquijor.

The DOE last year conducted the 1st Wind Contracting Round where it offered 16 potential sites to investors.

Of the 16 sites, pre-commercial contracts had been issued to three firms for the development of five areas.

Philippine Hybrid Energy Systems Inc. got three PCCs for wind projects in Marinduque, Baleno in Masbate and Tablas in Romblon, having a combined capacity of 30 megawatts (MW).

Trans-Asia Renewable Energy Corp. was awarded a contract for a 30-MW project in Sual, Pangasinan, while San Carlos Wind Power Corp. was given the right to develop 25 MW of wind potential in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental.

Several firms have also submitted expressions of interest for the 11 other sites, while some are already conducting pre-feasibility studies on the potential areas.

Lepanto in talks with prospective foreign partners

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

LEPANTO CONSOLIDATED MINING, THE country's top gold producer, is in talks with foreign investors for three of its major mining projects.

Lepanto president Bryan Yap told INQUIRER yesterday that Zijin Mining Group Co. Ltd. of China remained interested in Lepanto's $30-million copper mine at Mankayan, Benguet province and other mining properties.

Talks are still ongoing with Zijin although no agreement has been signed yet as of this time. The company has already done due diligence on Lepanto's Mankayan mine site.

The Mankayan mines produce more than 200 ounces of gold a day.

Mining operations at the Mankayan site consist of two of Lepanto's projects, Victoria I and Teresa (formerly Victoria II). It was the subject of a labor strike a few months ago.

Yap also said it was too early to comment on a report indicating that Zijin would be given 50 percent control of the the Mankayan copper mine if it would infuse $30 million into the project.

Aside from Mankayan, Lepanto is in talks with Canadian firm Ivanhoe Mines for its Far South East gold project also in Benguet province. Ivanhoe is undertaking a due diligence on the project.

Yap said there were other investors interested in the project. He, however, refused to identify them.

Lepanto owns 60 percent of Far South East and is willing to get diluted to allow an investor to infuse fresh capital into the project.

Lepanto has also received proposals for the exploration of its Kalayaan mining project in Surigao del Norte under affiliate Manila Mining Corp.

Semirara declares cash dividend

SEMIRARA MINING CORP. WILL DECLARE A cash dividend equivalent to 20 percent of its 2005 net income or about P1.20 per share. It has yet to set the record and payment dates.

Semirara expects a fourth-quarter profit of P774 million and an end-2005 net profit after tax of P1.6 billion.

The company's board resolved at a meeting last week to set aside one-fifth of its income for dividends to honor its commitment to local and foreign investors early this year when it sold 46.875 million shares in an international shares offering.

The company continues its large material extraction from the pit in anticipation of Calaca plant No. 2's resumption of operations and to minimize unused capacity.

Total materials moved from January to September this year almost equaled that for the whole of 2004. The January-September coal production this year was less than last year's.

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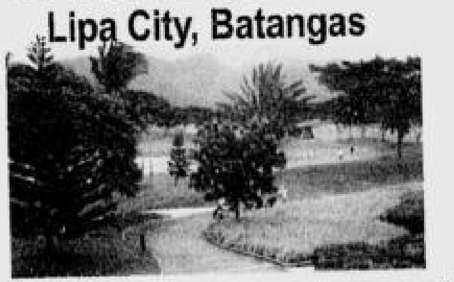

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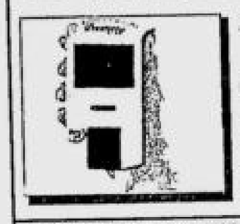

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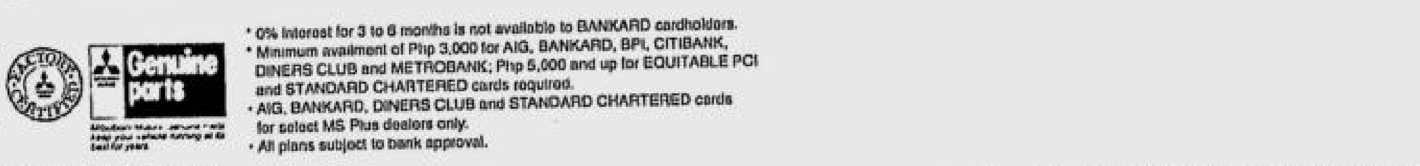

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Finance expects '06 deficit to hit P115B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET deficit would be reduced to P115 billion next year if the passage of the proposed 2006 budget would be delayed by three months, the longest delay seen by finance officials.

But while this would help the government's fiscal position look better, the Department of Finance is unhappy with the delay because it would mean no improvement in its budget for infrastructure and basic services. It would also result in the deferment of the salary hike for government workers, the DOF said.

The last time government workers got a salary hike was in 2000.

The Arroyo administration's fiscal program for 2006 placed the deficit for the year at P125 billion.

The possible delay in the passage of the proposed 2006 national budget would force the government to set its expenditure program at the 2005 level, which was lower than the program for next year.

The DOF said expenditures for 2006 would reach only P1.08 trillion, lower than the P1.09 trillion stated in the proposed 2006 budget, if the 2005 expenditure program would be used in the first three months next year.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the DOF was expecting a one- to three-month delay in the passage of the 2006 budget since Congress was preoccupied with other matters, such as the "Hello Garci" hearing.

The finance chief said the DOF was hoping the delay would be shortened to prevent the 2006 fiscal program from being significantly revised.

With a three-month delay, operating expenditures would be trimmed down to P922.9 billion, from the original program of P924.7 billion. Expenditures for capital outlay, meanwhile, would be cut to P152.47 billion, from the proposed P160.4 billion.

Sen. Manuel Villar had asked the DOF and the Department of Budget and Management to present estimates of expenditures under a scenario of a delayed passage of the 2006 budget and of a totally reenacted 2005 budget.

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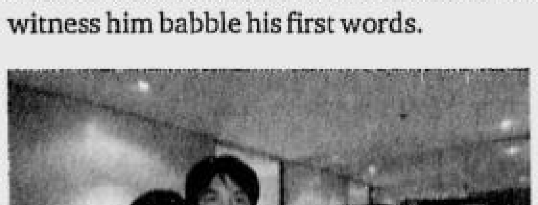
LPHI: Helping the middle-class secure their dreams

The LPHI management team (from lef) : Bong Haduca, Ricky Celis, Dodo Ocampo, Dinna Bayangos (President), Leo Montenegro and Steve Dy

Shortly after they got married, telecommunication engineers Bryan and Rowena Orpiano moved into their own unit at One Aeropolis, a residential condominium developed by Laguna Properties Holdings, Inc.(LPHI), an Ayala Land subsidiary. They very much enjoy the fact that their home is just a few minutes commute from where they work, which is on Dr. A. Santos Drive in Paranaque.

Rowena, who is expecting their firstborn soon, will most likely appreciate the fact that she is just one ride away from her baby. This means that she -- and Bryan --can easily rush home should the need arise to take the infant to the doctor or to witness him babble his first words.



Rowena and Brian Orpiano: Their LPHI home allows them to face the future with confidence.

Some 15 years ago, the option of owning a home that would afford a secure quality of life did not exist for most young couples even if they both had good careers. Opportunities to have their very own place reasonably near work were few and far between and hardly came with an assurance of the developer's reliability and integrity.

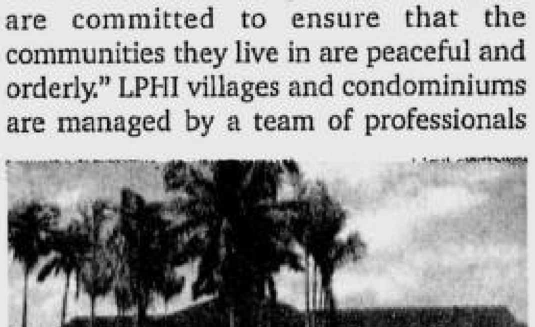
LPHI has since sold more than 10,000 homes in 12 locations throughout the country. Its clients include young professionals, entrepreneurs and other mid-income earners. Drawing from its Ayala Land heritage, the leading provider of homes in the P1-2 million range has definitely raised standards in the affordable housing segment and given many start-up families reason to celebrate its 15th anniversary beginning this month.

Composed mostly of former renters, early nesters and single professionals and businessmen, buyers of LPHI developments consider their purchases as upgrades and a source of security, according to LPHI president Dinna Bayangos. She cites studies that look into the mindsets of buyers. "We are gratified that for the past 15 years, LPHI has been providing homes that are perceived as havens by their owners," she says. "LPHI has helped many couples secure their future and we will continue to pursue this direction."

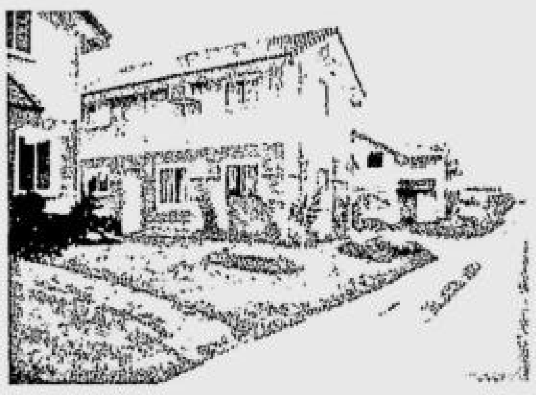
LPHI was established in 1990 by Ayala Land, the country's largest and most trusted real estate company, to fill the niche for homes within the reach of the average Filipino. Beginning with its first communities in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, LPHI has expanded from houses-and-lots only to residential condominiums in convenient Metro Manila locations. Units are available for as low as P500,000. Monthly amortizations for LPHI homes begin at P5,000 .

In the past 15 years, a combination of better finances resulting from the overseas employment of family members, two-income early nesters and more opportunities for professionals and entrepreneurs have led to a boom in the affordable housing segment. Riding on the expansion of the middle class, LPHI tapped innovative building systems to keep costs within reach of mid-income earners.

"LPHI understands that customers want homes that will enhance their sense of security," says Bayangos. "That is why our homes are for keeps. In addition, we are committed to ensure that the communities they live in are peaceful and orderly." LPHI villages and condominiums are managed by a team of professionals that attend to the day-to-day needs of the residents, organize activities to forge closer bonds among neighbors, while keeping them aware of contributions they can make to enhance the environment.



Studies reveal that LPHI homeowners perceive their hard-earned homes and communities as havens.



Thriving communities with active homeowners' associations set LPHI apart from its competitors.

Thriving communities with active homeowners' associations set LPHI apart from its competitors. LPHI provides guidance, orientation and training to officers of the association so they know how to manage infrastructure systems and security. Even after LPHI has sold its last lot, it continues to assist its communities by way of a trust fund and technical assistance in sustaining basic services such as power, water and other necessary infrastructure.

LPHI's staying power has clearly differentiated it from many others in the segment whose fortunes have tracked the boom and bust cycle of Philippine real estate.

"Our clients consider a home among the pinnacles of their achievements," notes Bayangos. "In the next 15 years, we intend to build a brand that will continue to fulfill the dreams and aspirations of this segment while remaining worthy of their trust."

For more information about LPHI, visit their website at www.lphi.com.ph or call 864-5744 for more details.

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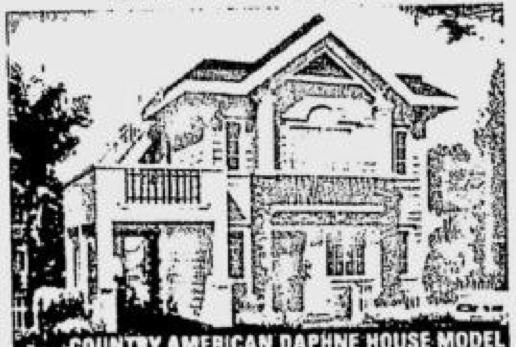
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NOTICE OF INTENDED DISTRIBUTION OF ESTATE

Any person having any claim upon the estate of **EARL KNOWLES WILKINSON** late of Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines, Retired, who died on 21 August 2003, must send particulars of the claim to the Executor PERMANENT TRUSTEE COMPANY LIMITED c/- Bartier Perry, Solicitors 133 Castlereagh Street, Sydney, NSW, Australia 2000 within one (1) calendar month from publication of this notice. After that time the assets of the estate may be conveyed and distributed having regard only to the claims of which at the time of conveyance or distribution the Executor has notice. Probate was granted in New South Wales Australia on 5 July 2004.

(PDI – December 7, 2005)

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www.orientalgardenstower.com

•MACTAN TOWER•
ROXAS BLVD TURNOVER2008 Model Units Ready 2 View 5242760 • 09178248178 Edwin

VISTA DE LAGO VILLAS
ACROSS D'FORT 15MINS TO AYALA
1.4M-2BR, 3.2M 4BR
10%DP MOVE-IN,BAL 4YRS 0%INT
0920-6348545

MANDALUYONG

CONDO, BNEW, 09192189817

Malayan Plaza / Var. Condo RFO 534-6610 0917-5336304

MANDA NEAR SHAW
BnewThse/3stry/3br/ 3-4tb maids1-2grgeP3 780M8903461

PARANAQUE

1.8M RESORT-TYPE nr S.M. 10% DP to move-in, or 0%, or No DP 15mins 2 Makati • 0917-5234223

PASIG

★GRAND 21★
The Newest Low Rise
Rsdtl Condo Bside Ortigas
Inside Capitolyo Subd.
Studio 1BR / 2BR Penthouse
1.05M Up 24 HR SECURITY
2MINS. AWAY FROM MEGMALL
Call: 638-1888 • 638-8188

★GRAND 21★
The Newest Low Rise
Rsdtl Condo Bside Ortigas
Inside Capitolyo Subd.
Studio 1BR / 2BR Penthouse
1.05M Up 24 HR SECURITY
2MINS. AWAY FROM MEGMALL
Call: 638-1888 • 638-8188

Malayan Plaza Best Location Podium 4121825 09177914366

QUEZON CITY

QC Condo 560T 0916-5412000

APARTMENT

MAKATI

Nr. Pasng Tamo/JP Rizal LA 33m² FA 00m² 2BR Up&Dwn Pls contct 0917-8502559 / 0917-5314881

LOT

PARANAQUE

1648m² COMM'L LOT
San Martin de Porres Near HONDA Neg. Atty. Aparocho 0917-2599040 • 0919-6267435

QUEZON CITY

FILINVEST2 LA192m² @5500 4539160 to 81 MALOU

GRAND VILLAS Top Row w/view back ATENEO LOTS hse & lots avble 426-5650 929-1832 • 0919-8212235

★KATIPUNAN Ext Resl lot nr UP Ateneo 204 to 408m² P8,500/m² 0918-9235216★

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

FARM/FISHPEN/ RAWLANDS

LIAN,BATS. nr Matabungkay 3000-15000m² with hse water elect Comml narra Mahgny nr hway alng concrt Road nice breezy Call 0916-3638956

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

COMMERCIAL

MAKATI

Comml/Office Spaces for lease (51m²-627m²)887-6003

COMMERCIAL/ RESIDENTIAL

QUEZON CITY

BURGUNDY PLAZA KATIPUNAN Q.C. FRNT ATENEO FA50 m² (res) 75&110m² (Ideal for SPA, GYM, CALL CENTER) 9289541 / 7361925

VARIED AREAS

2ND ST NR RIZAL AVE 2 BR 2TB FA 72M² P12T/M MAYON NR RETIRO JOLLIBEE 2 TB FA 120M² P22T/M Q. HIWAY NR MINDANAO AVE 1TB 285M² P75T/MO. 7312110/89

CONDO/TWNHSE

MANILA

Ocean Tower, Rxs Blvd 3BR&TB, Pkg, Facing Bay 55K; 09178587929

SAN JUAN

G'HILLS 1BR 5268048/49

APARTMENT

MANILA

840 P.Noval NR UST Tel 7313035 7361925 9289541

WANTED TO LEASE

URGENT need restaurant site Recto/Quezon Blvd/Legarda Quiapo/Sampaloc, 100m² up, frontage 5m up, w/2/F 150m² 150m away sch 09164155785 restsiteyahoo.com

ROOM & BOARD

El Grande Inn 8257524
BF Pque P200! Tel8275345

•FURNISH PASAY 8872865•

Windsor Inn Maceda St nr 7-11 Dimasalang, Manila 7118679, 7636781(24hrs)

BEDSPACE

MAKATI

Mktl nr Ayala P1T Ldy 8974697

BUSINESS RENTAL

PTAMO nr BUENDIA
38m² & 185m² 8903461 ofc hrs

Dental Clinic For Sale/Lease Rm224 Atrium Bldg Makati •811-4071/823-6047•

RESORT LEASE/ RENT

Pansol HotSprng priv 5T 7767507

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

MALATE MLA 526-8048/49

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HONDA

CRV'02 8265861 09189420180

MITSUBISHI

L300'95 Closed Van 130T Neg 09178557978/8384275 Gery

PARTS & ACCESSORIES

QUICK SERVICE!8AM -7AM!
EFI; ENGINE TUNE-UP
WHEEL ALIGN;BALANCING
CREDIT CARDS HONORED
FREE AFTER SALES SERVICE
RUBBERVOLT 36 WEST AVE
77 VIS AV. 115 MINDAV QC
371-6783 / 920-1794 / 455-6093 & 20

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

Affordable Rent a Car Hiace, Vios, Corolla Low Rates 0920-9518097

CarsVans CoasterBus 422-9296

MARIAN CARS•VANS•BRDAL 8969956

Cheap Van 9330311;9348411

KHALID
Lowest Rate Cars, Revo, Vans
T-8723046/8718862 Cell 09218284412

CRV Innova Starex 9483535

P800/L3 9136710 / 4333682

RENT A VAN
0917-5444721 • 642-4405

REVO w/driver 9272821

ABC OPEN 24 HRS.
HI-ACE*STAREX*CRV
L300*URVAN*REVO
NEW CARS/SUV/4X4/BUSES
MLA:536-8822*303-9789
Q.C.:426-2278*426-4084

WANTED TO BUY

BILI KO O2 MO T-8990215

CAR LOAN

1% Auto Easy 5344441

1% Car Lending 915-3460
United Tree Car Loan Corp.

1% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1% w/out taking car 7262780

1% w/out taking car 5315577

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% easy carloan 7815352/55

1.5% w/o taking Car 7228942-43

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/o taking car 7723810/12

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/oTaking Car 8968630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY

A NAME YOU CAN TRUST!
MANILA WATCH EXCHANGE
BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX+OTHERS
& OTHER SWISS WATCHES
DIAMONDS / JEWELRY
HI-APPRAISAL/FAST CASH
REPAIR/POLISH ANY WATCH
T#804-0484 • 834-2886

"PROFESSIONAL & CREDIBLE"
WE BUY USED
SWISS WATCHES
SECONDO 2/F GLORIETTA 1 (8940262
SWISS WATCH LOANS
LOW 5% INTEREST
AGENCIA DE MAKATI 889-7956

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY

WE BUY AT HIGH PRICE
ROLEX
5646593 5897041
5633742 0917-8473744

BUYING ROLEX
Other WATCHES, BEST PRICE
0917-8884040 • 7269687
7220433 • 4123543

MISCELLANEOUS

For Sale SPLENDIDO Share Tagaytay 1.8M 09198653109

PETS

DOG TRAINER 0919-7219020

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ALTAGRACIA PARADERO YUZON & CONRADO YUZON was extrajudicially settled among his heirs with waiver of rights before Notary Public Atty Hector Centeno as per Doc160; Page32; Book 8; Series 2005.
PDI-Nov.30 Dec.7&14, 2005

Notice is hereby given that the heirs of HERMENEGILDO M. CURIO have executed a Deed of Adjudication with Waiver of his estate covered by TCT # N-176108 of Reg. of Deeds for QC on Nov. 21, 2005 per Doc 340; Page 69; Book VIII; Series of 2005 before Notary Public Atty Lourdes T. Pagayatan of QC.
PDI-Nov 23,30 & Dec 7, 2005

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late JOSIE MARAVILLA ZAMORA has been extrajudicially settled among her heirs per Doc. No. 25 Page No. 5 Book No. VIII Series of 2005 before Notary Public Jaime Discaya of Quezon City.
PDI-Nov.30,Dec.7&14, 2005

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that FIRST METRO INVESTMENT CORP. stock certificate no. 100015050 for 5220 shares issued to LOURDES C. GOQUINGCO was reported lost. If no contest received new certificate will be issued.
PDI-Nov. 23, 30 & Dec. 7. 2005

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

earnextranow.com code: atb2004 8531008 09178901851

Garments, P20 Up 412-8673

★ VIRTUAL STORE ★
Sell your Products & Services to the World 24Hrs a day 7 days a week with your own Website 8944050•8925494•8175511

MLM Visit www.lamagel.com/rich Tess / Cesar 831-1112 0917-8838088

RTW CONSIGN 0917-8830002

NEED SIDELINE! Set your Hrs! P/F up tp 20K/mo. 376-2642 & 44

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

MARKETING MANAGER
COVERBOY BAR
0920-9064273

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

LICENSE FOR PRIVATE RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT AGENCY

PRPA LICENSE NO. M-05-04-233

☐ New ☒ Renewal

TIN NO. 005-119-612-000

This license to recruit, process and deploy landbased workers is hereby granted to

ALMER MANPOWER CORPORATION
5th Floor, Rufino Building,
Ayala Avenue corner Vicente Rufino Street
Makati City

Ma. Erlinda J. Dichoson
President & Gen. Manager

Monina Nonalilada
Accounting Manager

pursuant to the Labor Code and the Omnibus Rules Implementing the Code.

This license shall be valid for the period 17 September 2005 to 16 September 2007 unless sooner revoked, cancelled or suspended for violation of the Labor Code and related issuances. Transfer or use by any other person or entity tenders this license null and void.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of National Capital Region, Department of Labor and Employment, to be affixed at the City of Manila, Philippines, this 29th day of September 2005.

(Sgd.) RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, Sr., CESO III
Regional Director

(Renewal of this license is thirty (30) days before expiration date)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region V, Legazpi City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR FREIGHT SERVICES FOR NFA ALBAY

The National Food Authority, Regional Office, Legazpi City invites all qualified contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the provisions of freight services of NFA local and imported grains from NFA Albay to NFA Masbate and Catanduanes for the year 2006, as follows:

Lot	Route	Estimated Volume For shipment (in bags of 50 kg)	Estimated Budget for the Contract to be Bid based on General Operating Fund
	Tabaco/Legazpi Port to:		
I	Virac Port, Virac Ctdnes.	347,200	Php 6,249,600.00
II	Mbt. Port, Mbt City	472,453	12,756,231.00
	TOTAL	819,653	Php 19,005,831:00

The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

	Activity	Date	Time
1.	Issuance of eligibility requirements & Bidding documents	- Nov. 30, 2005 to Dec. 15, 2005	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
2.	Pre-bid Conference	- Dec. 16, 2005	10:00 AM
3.	Deadline for the Submission of Eligibility requirements and Bid Proposal	- Dec. 29, 2005	9:00 AM
4.	Opening of Bids	- Dec. 29, 2005	9:30 AM

The venue of pre-bid and bidding conferences will be at the 2nd Floor of NFA Regional Office No. V, Pier Site, Legazpi City.

The eligibility requirements and other bid documents can be obtained from the RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-transferrable/non-refundable registration fee in the amount of P4,000.00.

To provide ample time to examine the bidding documents and to prepare their respective bids, prospective bidders may secure the needed eligibility requirements and other related documents at the time the invitation to apply for eligibility and to bid is first advertised.

For further inquiries, you may contact the RBAC Secretariat in the following telephone numbers: (052) 480-7933/480-7015/480-7085/820-008 and fax number (052) 480-7900.

It is required that prospective bidders must have a single largest contract completed within the last five (5) years and similar to the contract to be bid whose value adjusted to current prices must be at least fifty (50%) percent of the ABC.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) JOSE B. GUEVARA
RBAC Chairman

(PDI - December 1 & 7, 2005)

SPECIAL OFFER!!!

Calling ALL interested parties while supply lasts. We would like you to submit your offer for our Janitorial and Office Equipment and Supplies consisting of the following:

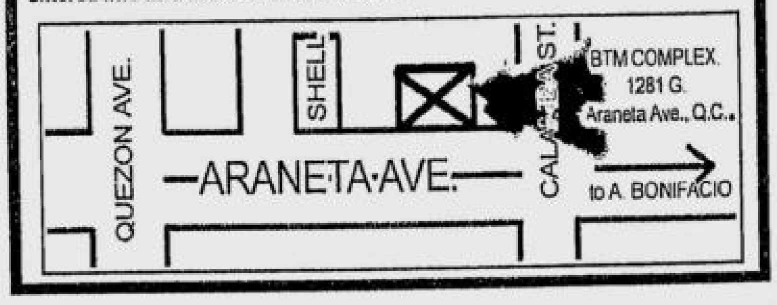
- 200+ Polishers
- Vacuum Cleaners
- Rubbermaid Products
- Cleaning Chemicals
- Custodial Supplies
- Office Tables
- Filing Cabinets

Deadline for submission of offers will be on **December 14, 2005** on or before **12:00 noon.**

For more information, you can visit our warehouse located at the **BTM Complex, 1281 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City**, or you can contact **Ms. Jane Fatima Valdez at (+632) 416-4213** or **Mr. Arji P. Obmerga at (+63917) 852-0406**.

We assume no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify parties for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the offer.

We reserve the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare the offer a failure, or not award the sale, and make no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE

CPA BKeper Exec Asst. Computer Expert 25YO b/w Cainta Road. Send resume cesar_cortes@yahoo.com 0917-8838088

LICENSED LADY DENTIST preferably UE graduate Call JAMES 09176233345

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

BOOKKEEPER/ACCOUNTANT
•8441934 / 8876850•

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

For a Memorial Park in Pangasinan
MARKETING GROUP
Part Time or Full Time Send biodata for Interview to 508-C Antel Tower 2626 Roxas Blvd. Pasay City
833-2545 • 075-6341039

POEA 24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144 • 722-1155

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 6, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	33.5	33.5	33	33.5	2,293,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	58.5	59	58	58.5	658,000
China Banking Corp.	605	605	605	605	790
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	1,030,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	54	54.5	54	54.5	9,900
International Exch. Bank	21.75	21.75	21.75	21.75	75,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	33	33	32	33	2,020,100
Philippine National Bank	31	31.5	31	31	34,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14	14	14	14	9,800
Security Bank Corp.	33	33.5	33	33.5	8,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	30	30.5	30	30.5	21,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	3160	3160	3160	3160	330
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	1,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.92	0.93	0.89	0.9	7,010,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	745	750	740	745	27,360
Ipeople Inc.	3	3.3	3	3.05	333,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	1,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	2,500,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	9,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.5	3.55	1,195,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1765	1765	1755	1765	138,750
Ivantage Corp.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	2,830,000
Philweb Corp.	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.016	60,300,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	15.75	14.75	15.5	78,900
Manila Electric Co. B	23.25	24	23.25	24	496,600
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.5	2,220,000
Petron Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.45	1,401,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.4	82,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.72	0.73	0.72	0.73	300,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	12,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.69	0.7	1,870,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.65	0.75	0.65	0.75	130,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.95	3.95	3.9	3.95	2,320,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	21,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	41.5	42	41.5	42	260,800
Pancake House Inc.	3.7	3.75	3.6	3.6	26,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64	64.5	63.5	64.5	403,600
San Miguel Corp. B	87	87	85	85.5	97,500
Universal Robina Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,543,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	14,000,000
Ayala Corp.	342.5	342.5	335	335	191,720
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	100,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	1,305,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	1,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.1	2.12	1,258,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.91	0.91	0.89	0.89	1,350,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	140,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.4	9,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.12	1.14	1.1	1.14	2,311,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.9	0.92	0.9	0.92	100,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	70,000
CADP Group Corp.	0.96	1	0.96	1	110,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	20,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.32	1,920,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	491,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.029	0.029	1,400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.22	8,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	50	50	49	49.5	1,257,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	1,000,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	352,000
Ionics Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	22,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.6	3.6	6,937,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.6	1.64	1.58	1.64	106,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1,818,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.35	3,000,000
Paxys Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.1	6.1	3,528,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.26	1.28	354,000
SM Investments Corp.	246	246	243	245	381,790
Uniwide Holdings Inc	0.13	0.13	0.125	0.13	3,100,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.115	0.12	0.115	0.12	2,120,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	10,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Bogo Medellin Milling Co.	15	15	15	15	12,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.85	4	3.85	3.95	59,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.18	1.22	1.18	1.22	34,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.06	1,575,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	100,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	410,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.8	160,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	1,450,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	225,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series AA	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series BB	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series CC	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	8,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.5	9.6	9.3	9.5	3,180,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	810,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	8,300,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.38	1,015,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	200,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	1,810,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	300,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	620,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.9	540,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	90,000
SM Development Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	75,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.1	8	8.1	10,697,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.96	0.96	0.93	0.93	300,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.98	0.98	0.97	0.97	110,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.2	6.2	6	6.1	2,617,000
Benguet Corp. A	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.8	13,000
Benguet Corp. B	30	30	30	30	1,500
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.56	1.56	1.54	1.54	100,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.215	8,580,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.25	12,330,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	79,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.029	95,600,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	20,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.34	1.34	1.32	1.32	646,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.64	1.68	1.62	1.66	7,964,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27	28	27	27.5	550,500
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	340,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	11,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	50,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	4,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.38	140,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	2,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	3,170,000

DISCLOSURES

SAN MIGUEL Corp. will list an additional 79,346 common shares tomorrow, Dec. 7.

***

LEPANTO Consolidated Mining Co. will begin trading an additional 40.98 million common shares tomorrow, Dec. 7.

***

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. disclosed that from Nov. 21 to Dec. 2, a total of 8,768 shares were exercised and fully paid for under the company's Stock Option Plan. This brings the number of Treasury Shares to 28.46 million shares.

***

CONCRETE Aggregates Corp. will hold a special stockholders' meeting on Jan. 24, 8 a.m. at the Board Room of the Ortigas & Co. Limited Partnership on the 9th floor of the Ortigas Building, Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City. Stockholders on record as of Dec. 19 shall be entitled to notice of and to vote at the said meeting. ***Compiled by Jamie Alarcon, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

December 6, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.848248	1.000000	54.0710
Japan	Yen	0.007023	0.008279	0.4477
United Kingdom	Pound	1.477309	1.741600	94.1701
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.109396	0.128967	6.9734
Switzerland	Franc	0.648806	0.764877	41.3577
Canada	Dollar	0.733208	0.864379	46.7378
Singapore	Dollar	0.503202	0.593225	32.0763
Australia	Dollar	0.636680	0.750582	40.5847
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.250593	2.653224	143.4625
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.226194	0.266660	14.4186
Brunei	Dollar	0.501714	0.591471	31.9814
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000100	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.020514	0.024184	1.3077
UAE	Dirham	0.230947	0.272264	14.7216
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.178900	63.7443
Argentina	Peso	0.283932	0.334728	18.0991
Brazil	Real	0.386781	0.455976	24.6551
Denmark	Kroner	0.134227	0.158240	8.5562
India	Rupee	0.018341	0.021622	1.1691
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.224374	0.264515	14.3026
Mexico	New Peso	0.081102	0.095611	5.1698
New Zealand	Dollar	0.609111	0.718081	38.8274
Norway	Kroner	0.127180	0.149932	8.1070
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014180	0.016717	0.9039
South Africa	Rand	0.134893	0.159025	8.5986
Korea	Won	0.000819	0.000965	0.0522
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025358	0.029895	1.6165
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000395	0.000466	0.0252

NutriAsia seeks $215-M loan to finance Del Monte acquisition

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

NUTRIASIA PACIFIC Ltd., the joint venture company formed by condiments king Joselito Campos, Jr. and food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., is securing $215 million in loans to partly finance its buy-in into pineapple products distributor Del Monte Pacific Ltd., industry sources told INQUIRER.

NutriAsia earlier announced it would get loans from HSBC Holdings Plc., state-led Development Bank of Philippines (DBP) and Banco De Oro Universal Bank to bankroll the acquisition.

Industry sources estimated that Del Monte was worth around $415 million based on NutriAsia's bid of 38.62 cents a share for the remaining shares.

Last Dec. 2, NutriAsia paid $206.5 million to MCI when it bought the latter's 49.8 percent or 538.2 million shares in Del Monte.

MCI, the holding company of the Lorenzo family in Del Monte, was effectively paid 38.18 cents apiece or a total of $205.5 million with an additional payment of $1 million.

The sale—estimated at P11 billion—completed the exit of the Lorenzo family from Del Monte.

Sources said completing the takeover would require either equity or capital infusion by San Miguel and the Campos group.

Credit analyst Standard & Poor's Rating Services, meanwhile, said in a statement yesterday that San Miguel has enough cash to fund its investment in Del Monte.

It estimated that San Miguel's investment in the joint venture would be more than $100 million.

As of end September 2005, San Miguel has P19 billion or $349 million in cash.

S&P also said that the recent decision by San Miguel to acquire Del Monte would not by itself have a rating impact on the company's long-term foreign currency credit rating (BB/Negative).

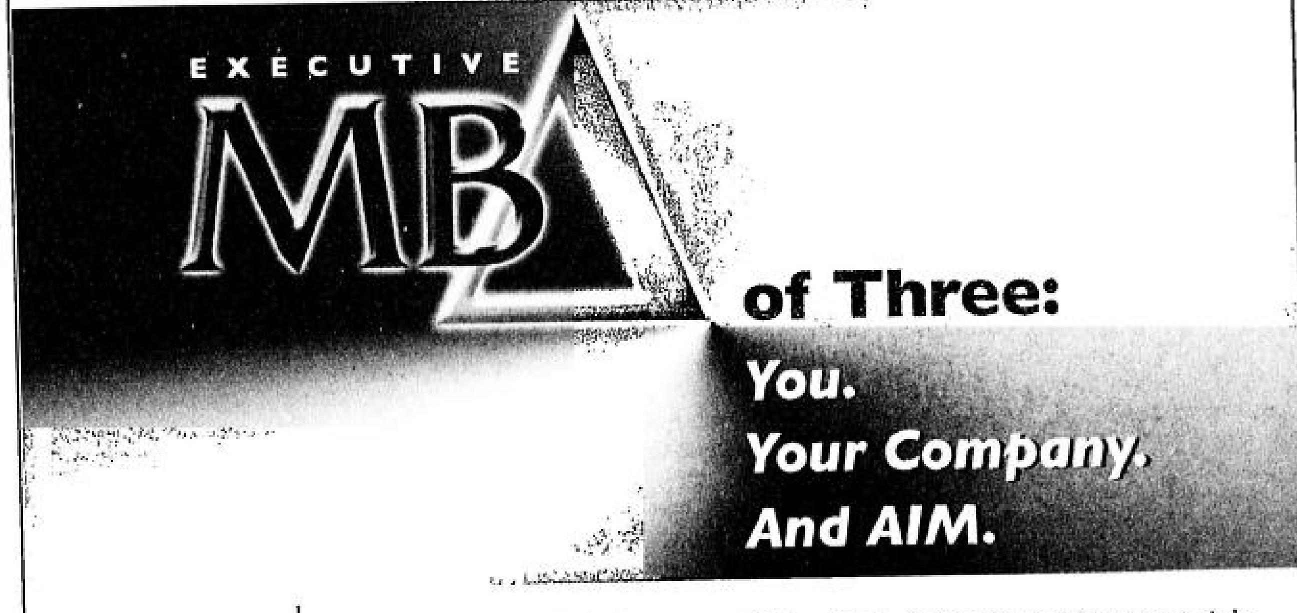
The acquisition is made through a joint venture company NutriAsia Pacific Ltd., which is 58 percent owned by the Campos family and 42 percent by San Miguel.

DMPL owns the Del Monte brand rights for the Philippines and the Indian subcontinent.

It is involved in the manufacturing of canned fruits, juice drinks, and concentrates, and has one of the world's largest pineapple plantations.

Del Monte, as an investment, is in line with San Miguel's strategy of enhancing its position in the food business, and in diversifying its business through overseas acquisition.

San Miguel completed the acquisition of Australian fresh dairy product manufacturer, National Foods Ltd., in June 2005, and is in the process of integrating its domestic and regional food business under National Foods.



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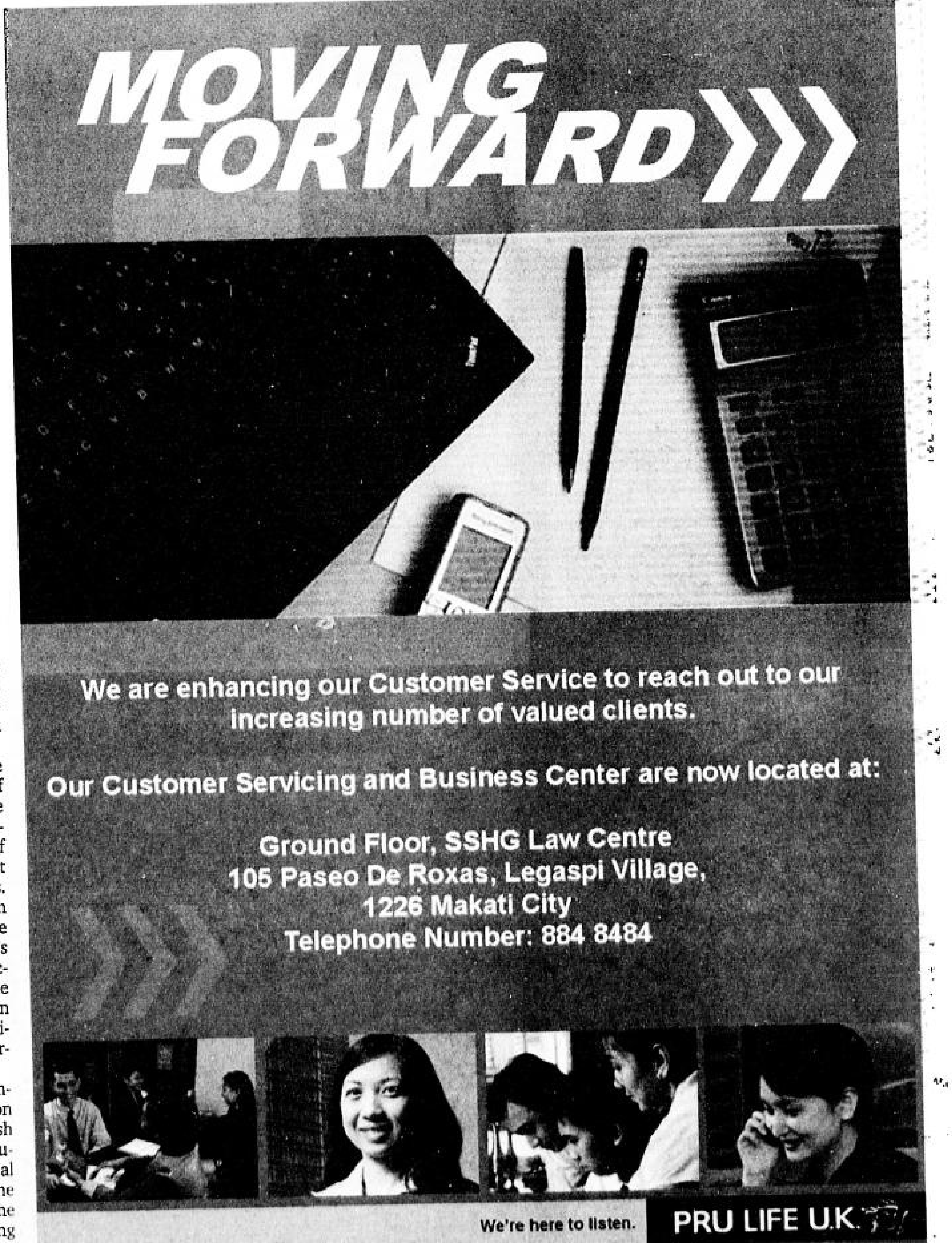

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Canadian firm gets DENR nod to pursue $2-B mine project

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONment and Natural Resources (DENR) has reinstated the mining permit of Crew Minerals Corp., allowing the Canadian firm to pursue its $2-billion nickel project in Mindoro.

Leo Jasareno, head of the DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau mining tenements division, said Crew Minerals, a subsidiary of Crew Gold based in Canada, would receive a prefeasibility study of the project.

Former DENR Secretary Heherson Alvarez reportedly canceled the permit in 2001, after he learned that the area—located right inside a watershed—comprised part of the Mangyan tribe's ancestral domain.

But according to Jan Vestrum, Crew Gold president and CEO, the mining permit of Crew Gold's Philippine subsidiary expired four years ago.

Environment Secretary Michael T. Defensor has given the green light for the Canadian firm to explore the mineral site in Aglubang, Mindoro.

The Crew Minerals in March 2004 applied for a Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA).

Vestrum earlier said that Crew Gold would put up a nickel processing plant that would be equipped with high-pressure acid leach technology to recover nickel and cobalt from ore.

This is similar to the technology being used by Rio Tuba Mining Corp. in its Coral Bay nickel project in Palawan province.

The Palawan project is a joint undertaking of Rio Tuba and Japan's Sumitomo Metal Mining Co. Ltd.

Vestrum said that Crew Gold would also pursue other mineral ventures, such as the Pamplona sulfur project in Negros Oriental.

Crew Development Corp., which is based in Vancouver, acquired the Mindoro gold mine concession when it took over the Norwegian company Mindex in 1999.

In December 2000, a Crew subsidiary, Aglubang Mineral Corporation, was granted a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) to explore and develop the 2,200-hectare concession area for 25 years.

FATHER, CRAFTSMAN, VENDOR A Banaue man holds his sleeping daughter in his arms as he tends to the wood products, which he crafted with his own hands. There are no actual trading posts in Ifugao. Most craftsmen in the area tend to sell their wares right in their own homes.

EV ESPIRITU

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(5) All funds managed by BPI Asset Management are Trust and/or Investment Management funds which DO NOT carry any guarantee of income or principal, and are NOT covered by the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC). Past performance is likewise not a guarantee of future results.

**applicable only if withdrawn during the minimum holding period*

Use authorized software, call centers urged

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AN INTERNATIONAL GROUP OF COMPUTER software vendors has called on the local contact center industry to shun unlicensed programs despite showing confidence that software piracy would further decline from the current rate of 71 percent.

Adrian S. Cristobal Jr., Director General of the International Property Office, said officials of the Business Software Alliance met with him and asked for continued support for the group's ongoing campaign against software piracy.

Cristobal said BSA specifically asked the IPO and its parent agency, the Department of Trade and Industry, to intervene in the use of illegal software among call center players and other industry associations.

He said BSA's director for anti-piracy in Asia, Tarun Sawney, informed him that although a memorandum of agreement has been signed between the BSA and the Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP) last year, about half of CCAP's members have not complied with the agreement.

The MOA committed CCAP members to "legalize" the software that they were using, one way of which was to show proof that their programs were licensed.

Last May, BSA announced that the software piracy rate in the Philippines went down 1 percentage point to 71 percent in 2004.

However, BSA data show that losses due to software piracy increased to $69 million or P3.7 billion from $55 million.

According to BSA Philippines' Ronald Chua, the country remains to have one of the highest piracy rates in the Asia-Pacific region.

Still, BSA expressed confidence that the use of unlicensed software would drop following the launch of the Pilipinas Anti-Piracy Team in August.

Cebu Pacific offers ₱1,999 fare for HK

CEBU PACIFIC (CEB), THE AIRLINE UNIT OF J.G. Summit Holdings Inc., is offering its 'Go' fares for Manila-Hong Kong flights beginning tomorrow for travel starting Jan. 9 next year.

Fares start at P1,999, an 80 percent drop from current fares.

"After rolling out the 'Go' fares on CEB's domestic routes, we are now ready to offer it to our regional sectors," said CEB General Manager Danilo Mojica, "We are the country's first low cost carrier and we are committed to continue giving the Filipino public low fares."

"We hope that this will also allow more overseas Filipino workers based in Hong Kong to come home and see their families more often, and for those who can't come home, perhaps the 'Go' fares will allow their families to visit them in Hong Kong instead" he said.

The Manila-Hong Kong route will be serviced by CEB's new 150-seater Airbus A319. CEB operates twice a day flights to Hong Kong with the morning flight leaving Manila at 8 am and arriving in Hong Kong at 10am. The afternoon flight leaves Manila at 4:40 p.m. arriving Hong Kong at 6:40p.m.

"With these year-round fares, we urge everyone to plan and book their trip ahead of time. It's never too early to buy your tickets for travel in 2006." Mojica said.

"CEB is all about offering choices. If traveling on business and your plans may change, get the Flexi fare, which allows you to change your schedule at no charge," he said. "If changes to plans aren't likely to happen, then get a 'Go' fare which requires a 48-hour notice for changes prior to departure with payment of applicable fees."

The airline recently opened its first regional office in Kowloon, Hong Kong to facilitate ticket sales and reservations.

CEB's HK office will also be used to boost the airline's promotion and marketing efforts in HK, China, Macao, Taiwan and Japan.

CEB pioneered low fares in the country in March 1996, forcing other airlines to do so, too.

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF UNISERVICES, INC.

Notice is hereby given to the public that **Uniservices, Inc.**, with Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") Registration No. A200011040 incorporated on 13 July 2000, will file with the SEC a Certificate of Amendment of its Articles of Incorporation shortening its corporate life to 13 December 2005. This dissolution is in accordance with the resolution of its Board of Directors dated 7 November 2005 duly approved by its stockholders representing at least two-thirds (2/3) of its outstanding capital stock on 14 November 2005.

Any person who may have a claim against said Corporation may present the same to the undersigned at Suite D, 7th Floor, The Valero Tower, 1227, Makati City, Metro Manila.

This announcement serves as notice to all parties concerned of the dissolution of said Company.

(Sgd.) **Danilo L. Cruz**
Corporate Secretary
UNISERVICES, INC.

(PDI--Dec. 7, 14 & 21, 2005)

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **PAMORA FARM** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as expanding producer of dressed chicken and its processed by-products on a Non-Pioneer status with an annual capacity of 31,200 pcs. or 40,560 kgs. dressed chicken and 1,872 kgs. processed by-products and with project site located at Km. 396 Garreta, Pidigan, Abra.

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and
Registration Department

(PDI--Dec. 7, 2005)

SET-UP APPROACH TO POVERTY

Vice president Noli "Kabayan" De Castro, Chairman, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, confers with Manny Pangilinan, Chairman, Philippine Long Distance Company, during the STEP-UP (Strategic Private Sector Partnerships for Urban Poverty Reduction Program) recognition event held on Nov. 21, 2005 at the Development Academy of the Philippines. In his keynote speech, the Vice President invited the Asian Development Bank to extend loans and not just grants to qualified non-government organizations (NGOs) to implement anti-poverty projects. The Vice President also cited the four elements which can form a potent antidote to the hopelessness that pervades poor communities–commitment, communication, collaboration and change with flexibility.

NFA Bulacan apprises legislators on palay procurement

TO PROVIDE LATEST INFORMATION ON the National Food Authority's palay procurement activities in Malolos City, NFA Bulacan provincial manager Mariano Alvarez paid visits to Bulacan legislators recently. Manager Alvarez met recently with representatives Wilhelmino Alvarado (first district); Pedro Pancho (2nd district); Lorna Silverio (3rd district); Reylina Nicolas (4th district); and Emmanuel Joel Villanueva (Cibac party List) to explain the agency's palay buying operations.

The government support price for palay is P10 per kilogram with additional incentives of P0.50 for drying, delivery and cooperative development. Although NFA's buying price is relatively lower than the prevailing price of some traders, it serves as a benchmark of palay traders in their procurement activities. Alvarez also reported that the NFA office here has set up two mobile procurement teams to serve farmers in far-flung areas. The NFA also maintains four buying stations situated at the Sta Rita GID warehouse in barangay Sta. Rita, San Miguel; Malipampang GID warehouse in barangay Malipampang San Ildefonso; Balagtas GID warehouse in barangay Burol 1st, Balagtas; and at the Tikay GID warehouse in barangay Tikay, Malolos City. For more information on NFA programs, the public may send their inquiries via the Text NFA Program through mobile number 0917-6210927.

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City
Healthline 637-9999 www.philhealth.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
No. ITB # 2005-016-g
LEASE OF OFFICE SPACES INTENDED FOR PHILHEALTH MEMBERS' ASSISTANCE CENTER AND THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT - NCR GROUP

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), through the Corporate Operating Budget 2005, intends to apply the sum of PhP 4,590,000.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the LEASE OF OFFICE SPACES INTENDED FOR PHILHEALTH MEMBERS' ASSISTANCE CENTER AND THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT - NCR GROUP. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

PhilHealth now invites Bids from duly licensed companies or business firms to apply for eligibility and to bid for the LEASE OF OFFICE SPACES INTENDED FOR PHILHEALTH MEMBERS' ASSISTANCE CENTER AND THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT - NCR GROUP, with the following specifications:

Location
The location of the building shall be along Shaw Boulevard and within one (1) kilometer radius from the Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (EDSA).

The area must not be prone to flooding.

Space Requirement
The total rentable space requirement shall be from 700 sq. m. to 800 sq. m. broken down as follows:
Ground Floor 250 sq. m. to 300 sq. m. intended for PMAC
Second Floor 500 sq. m. to 600 sq. m. intended for PRO NCR

Parking Requirement
The bidder shall provide at least ten (10) parking spaces for use of PhilHealth and its clients

Period of the Contract
The term of the Contract shall be for a period of Two (2) years, specifically from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2007, subject to renewal.

CY 2004 and CY 2005 is the relevant period for contracts which will be required to be submitted by PhilHealth.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of the Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act". Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees (OSBAC) in the Central Office of PhilHealth, Room 1107 11th floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City, and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from December 8 to 20, 2005 at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of PhP 3,000.00 cash. The prospective Bidder or his authorized representative shall receive the Bidding Documents personally.

PhilHealth will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on December 21, 2005, 10:30 a.m. at the OSBAC Conference Room (Rm. 1106), PhilHealth Central Office, 11th floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the OSBAC Conference Room on or before January 9, 2006, 10:30 a.m. The official time shall be based on the wall clock located at the OSBAC Conference Room. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on January 9, 2006, 10:30 a.m. at OSBAC Conference Room. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

PhilHealth reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office
Mr. Joseph O. Vergara
Rm. 1107, 11th Floor Citystate Centre
709 Shaw Blvd., Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City
Tel. (02) 637-9999 locals 1128, 1130 and 1830
E-mail add: osbac@philhealth.gov.ph
Facsimile No. 637-4735
www.philhealth.gov.ph

(Sgd.) Atty. VALENTIN C. GUANIO
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee for Goods and Services

(PDI--Dec. 7 & 14, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
860 Arcadia Building, Quezon Ave., Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Department of Agriculture invites all Eligible Bidders to apply and to Bid for the following projects:

1. Drydocking and Minor Repair of M/V DA-BFAR
   Particulars:

LOA	- 60.00 meters	Depth	- 4.5 meters
Breadth	- 54.00 meters	Gross Tonnage	- 1186 GT

2. Drydocking and Repair of DA-BFAR MCS 3002 (FRP)

LOA	- 30.00 meters	Depth	- 3.4 meters
Breadth	- 6.00 meters	Draft	- 1.5 meters
Gross Tonnage	- 112 GT		

Only MARINA Accredited Shipbuilders/Owners are qualified to participate in the project.

Interested Parties can obtain the Eligibility Requirements and Bid Form at the PBAC Secretariat, BFAR Property Section, Ground Floor, Arcadia Bldg., 860 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City from **December 15 to 20, 2005.**

Schedule of Pre-Bid Conference

1. Drydocking and Minor Repair of M/V DA-BFAR, **21 December 2005 at 2:00 p.m.**, 4/F BFAR Conference Room
2. Drydocking and Repair of DA-BFAR MCS 3002, **21 December 2005 at 2:00 p.m.**, 4/F BFAR Conference Room

Submission of documents and Opening of Bids will be on **December 27, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the BFAR Conference Room.

Failure to comply with the requirements shall be immediate ground for disqualification.

BFAR reserves the right to reject any or all Bids, waive any defect or informality thereof, accept the bid and award of the contract to the winning bidder with the most advantageous offer to BFAR. The BFAR assume no responsibility to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or lose that maybe incurred for the preparation of bids, or does not guarantee that an Award will be made.

(Sgd.) **MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.**
Director

(PDI - Dec. 7, 2005)

ERRATUM

In the advertisement of **Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission** Invitation for Bids published in this paper on December 4, 2005 Page B7, the following were erroneously printed:

1. Description of Works should have read:
   Construction and Development of Public Markets for Sunny Brooke 1-2 and Country Meadow and Construction and Development of 2 Units of Two-Storey School Buildings for Sunny Brooke 3 relocation site located in Bgy. San Francisco, Gen. Trias, Cavite.

2. Third part of the invitation for Bids re: schedule of activities should read as follow:

Activity	Date
Securing of (a) Eligibility Checklist or (b) submission of Letter of intent and purchase of complete set of Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 12,500.00/ package	**December 5-12, 2005**
Securing of additional eligibility information (if any) and inspection of Bidding Documents.	**December 5-12, 2005**

Our apologies.

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PRISM
PRIVATE SECTOR MOBILIZATION FOR FAMILY PLANNING

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The Private Sector Mobilization in Family Planning (PRISM) Project
Scope of Work

Senior Field Operations Director

Background:

The PRISM project supports USAID/Philippines' Strategic Objective 3, Desired family size and improved health sustainably achieved. It is the main activity for achieving Intermediate Result (IR) 2, "Provision of quality services by private and commercial providers expanded." PRISM also supports IR 4, "Policy environment and financing for provision of services improved." The project focuses on three components: increased workplace support for FP services and referrals; establishment of viable, mass market brands of hormonal contraceptives; and increased business value of family planning among private practice providers.

Tasks:

- Supervise and provide guidance to Regional Operations Directors.
- Build and maintain technical bridge between project Strategic Planning Unit and field operations to ensure integration between project strategies and tools and field operations. That is, ensure that strategies and tools are appropriately applied in SIAs to achieve project-wide goals and objectives.
- Ensure that feedback from field application of those strategies and tools is effectively and efficiently communicated back to the Strategic Planning Unit.
- Ensure that lessons learned from field application of project strategies and tools as designed by the Strategic Planning Unit are mobilized and fed into quarterly report preparations, semi-annual project reviews, and annual project-wide work planning.
- Supervise the Field Support Manager to ensure that logistic needs of the regional project units and SIAs with respect to local grants and subcontracts, training, communications, and monitoring and evaluation are effectively and efficiently communicated to the appropriate manager or specialist in the Strategic Planning or the Project Support and Administration Unit, and to ensure that follow-up by these units is appropriate, meeting field needs as expressed.
- Assist technical and administrative staff in the regional office to identify needs for technical assistance and support from PRISM headquarters, assist in mobilizing such support, and monitor its provision.
- Develop scopes of work for technical assistance to be requested from PRISM headquarters staff or from independent consultants, seeking input from relevant technical or administrative staff in the region and at the headquarters office in Manila.
- Oversee activities of PRISM headquarters staff and independent consultants traveling to the region on official project business.
- Organize and conduct quarterly meetings or all regional staff to facilitate integration of the regional team and sharing of lessons learned.

Reporting:

The senior field operations director will report directly to the deputy chief of party or her designee, who will be responsible for monitoring the director's overall performance.

Qualifications:

- 10 years experience managing field operations of a project or organization.
- Masters degree in management, social science, or a related field.
- Knowledge of the business environment, healthcare industry, or both.
- Demonstrated leadership ability and effectiveness in team-oriented work environments.

Interested applicants should e-mail their application letter and CV at jobs@prism.org.ph on or before 14th of December 2005. Please indicate the **subject** of your email as **"Position Code: SFOD"**.

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for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Mondays to Saturdays
12:00 noon
Day before publication
Sundays
12:00 noon
every Thursday

VITARICH CORPORATION

condoles with the family of
the late

MRS. MA. DEL SOCORRO "CORINNA" MUTUC-SARMIENTO

who passed away at the age of 51
on December 5, 2005.

She is survived by her husband, Vitarich Corp. Chairman **Roger M. Sarmiento**; children **Rocco** and **Terri**, **Nikki**, **Issa** and **Mika**, and grandson, **Kenshin**.

Her remains were cremated on December 5, 2005.

The wake is scheduled on the following dates:

December 6 to 9, 2005	Capilla dela Virgen Santuario de San Antonio Forbes Park, Makati (Daily Masses at 8:00 p.m.)
December 10, 2005	Requiem Mass, 1:00 p.m. Santuario de San Antonio Parish Church Forbes Park, Makati
December 11 to 13, 2005	Sarmiento Residence Matina, Davao City

"I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me will live even when he dies, and no one who lives and believes in Me will ever die."

– John 11:25-26

Rosario "Charing" Lloren-Bernardez

now peacefully rests in the Grace and Goodness of our Lord on December 4, 2005 at the age of 85.

Her loving children **Alexis & Siegfried**, **Roseanna (†) & Joshua (†)**, **Joy & Joey**, **Nelson**, **Aida & Edgar**, **Gov. Luisa Cuaresma & Boyie (†)**, **Leo & Gigi**; grandchildren, relatives, and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Luna Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at Everest Hills Memorial Park after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate;
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS

"I have fought the good life; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith."
2 Timothy 4:7

RTC Judge JOSE G. GENILO, JR.

*Peacefully joined our Creator and wife **Isabel Flores Genilo***
on December 5, 2005.

His bereaved family **Elnora G. Diokno**, children **Tito** & **Lita**, **Celeste** & **Mat**, **Girlie** & **Marvin**; grandchildren **Kokoy**, **Dingdong**, **Dereck**, **Donald**, **Doreen** & **Kristina**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in Genilo St. Poblacion I, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro.

Interment will be on Sunday, December 11, 2005 at the Naujan Catholic Cemetery after the 2:00 PM Mass.

He has lived a full life. He is now at peace with his Creator.

DEATH NOTICE

MANUEL C. MANAHAN

Peacefully joined our Creator on December 2, 2005 at the age of 75.

Interment will be today, December 7, 2005 at Good Shepherd Memorial Park, Bulacan, Bulacan after the 1 pm Mass.

Relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

John 3:16

Eighteenth Death Anniversary
of

JAIME V. ONGPIN

June 15, 1938 – December 7, 1987

In Loving Memory
On the 30th Death Anniversary of

RAFAEL DIOKNO SALCEDO

Who joined his Creator on December 7, 1975

His family requests the reader to pray for the repose of his soul.
Holy Masses will be offered today for his intention at the following churches:

St. Martin of Tours, Parish, *Taal Batangas*	6:00 AM
St. Joseph's Convent of Perpetual Adoration (Pink Sisters) *Hemady St., New Manila, Quezon City*	6:00 AM
Santuario del Sto. Cristo, *F. Blumentritt St., San Juan, Metro Manila*	7:00 AM
St. John Bosco Parish, *Arnaiz St., Makati*	12:00 PM
Sta. Maria Della Strada, *Katipunan Ave., Quezon City*	6:00 PM
Mary the Queen Parish, *Madison St., San Juan, Metro Manila*	6:00 PM
Santuario de San Jose East Greenhills, *Mandaluyong, Metro Manila*	6:15 PM
St. James the Great Parish, *Ayala Alabang*	6:30 PM
Shrine of our Lady of Caysasay, *Taal, Batangas*	6:30 PM

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Matthew 10:39

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord." Matthew 10:39

The Board of Directors & Stockholders of

MERMAC, INCORPORATED

deeply mourn the passing of

Mercedes Zobel McMicking

who passed away on the 3rd day of December 2005
at the age of 98 in Sotogrande, Spain.

Please join us in prayer for the eternal repose of her soul.

The funeral mass will be held on Saturday, December 10, 2005,
at 8:15 A.M. at Santuario de San Antonio Parish,
Forbes Park, Makati City.

CLASSIFIEDS

NFA's CAUs continue to answer consumers' concerns

AT LEAST 1,568 CUStomers were served by the National Food Authority's Customer Assistance Units (CAUs) installed in NFA offices nationwide for the month of October. Customers' concerns included seven number of complaints, 256 inquiries and 1,305 requests including application for accreditation, schedule of deployment of rolling stores, purchase of NFA rice and alleged diversion of stocks. CAUs are set-up in NFA offices nationwide manned by NFA personnel who are trained to answer inquiries, complaints and requests or suggestions from walk-in customers of the food agency. Meanwhile, the NFA also accepts complaints and other concerns via the Text NFA program. Customers anywhere in the country may send text or SMS messages to mobile number 0917-6210927. The NFA, through its business regulations department (BRD), answers these questions within 24 hours or until matters are verified from concerned offices.

Pag-IBIG Fund
The Atrium of Makati
Makati Avenue, City of Makati

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

DESIGN CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR THE PAG-IBIG FUND LUCENA, NAGA AND PAMPANGA BRANCHES

The Pag-IBIG Fund intends to apply the sum of P3,885,860.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Design Consultancy Services for the Pag-IBIG Fund Lucena, Naga and Pampanga Branches. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals.

The Pag-IBIG Fund now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential Bidders to apply for eligibility and short listing for Design Consultancy Services for the Pag-IBIG Fund Lucena, Naga and Pampanga Branches. Interested consultants must submit their LOIs on or before 5:00 p.m. of December 21, 2005 at Rm. 704, Atrium of Makati Condominium Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City and,secure the Eligibility Documents therefrom. The BAC-CS Secretariat will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms, upon their submission of the LOI, and upon their payments of a non-refundable amount of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) to the Pag-IBIG Fund Cashier. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents: 2:00 p.m. of January 6, 2006 at Rm. 602, Atrium of Makati Condominium Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City. Only those that are shortlisted will be entitled to submit bids.

The BAC-CS shall draw up the short list of consultants from those who have submitted LOIs and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A). The short list of prospective bidders shall consist of five (5) consultants. The criteria and rating system for short listing are:

Experience and Capability of Firm	-	40%
Qualification of Personnel	-	40%
Current Workload relative to Capacity	-	20%
		100%

LOIs must be delivered by hand or through mail at the above stated address on or before 5:00 p.m. of December 21, 2005.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only bids from short listed consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

The Pag-IBIG Fund shall evaluate bids using the Quality Based Evaluation/Selection (QBE) procedure The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instruction to Bidders.

The Pag-IBIG Fund will hold a Pre-Bid Conference (for eligibility) at 2:00 p.m. of December 19, 2005 at the following address: Room 602, 6/F Atrium of Makati Condominium Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City

Interested consultants may obtain further information from Pag-IBIG Fund at this address: Rm. 704. Atrium of Makati Condominium Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC-CS Secretariat and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P 2,500.00). The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative on or before 2:00 p.m. of January 31, 2006.

The Pag-IBIG Fund reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **MS. TESSIE M. GONZALES**
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee-Consulting Services

(PDI--Dec. 1 & 7, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS AND SEWERAGE SYSTEM
CORPORATE OFFICE
4th Floor, Administration Building, MWSS Complex
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City 1105 Philippines
Tel. Nos. +63(+2) 922-3757; 922-2969 Fax No. +63(+2) 921-2887

INVITATION TO BID

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), will conduct a public bidding for the per kilo/lot sale and disposal of the following surplus materials and various unserviceable equipment and furnitures, on an "as is-where is basis", located at the San Juan Stockyard, San Juan, Metro Manila and at the MWSS Property Management Storage, Balara, Quezon City. These materials are composed of the following:

Item No.	Materials Description	Location	Approximate Quantity	MWSS Base Price
1.	Surplus project materials composed of different kinds of pipes and fittings	San Juan Stockyard, San Juan, M.M.	2,000,000 kilos	P12.00/kilo
2.	Heavy/Solid Metal	MWSS Balara, Q.C.	15,000 kilos	P10.83/kilo
3.	Tin Sheet Scrap Metal (Yero)	MWW Balara, Q.C.	2,000 kilos	P7.16/kilo
4.	Scrap Kitchen Fixtures, Stainless	MWW Balara, Q.C.	500 kilos	P63.66/kilo
5.	Aluminum Metal	MWSS Balara, Q.C.	500 kilos	P61.66/kilo
6.	Scrap Brass (Tansong Dilaw)	MWSS Balara, Q.C.	7,500 kilos	P104.66/kilo
7.	Unserviceable Computers, Printers, Xerox Machines, Electronic Communication Equipment and Accessories	MWSS Balara, Q.C.	7,000 kilos	P8.00/kilo
8.	Unserviceable Different Types and Model Typewriter	MWSS Balara, Q.C.	3,000 kilos	P10.16/kilo
9.	Scrap/Waste Assorted Papers	MWSS Balara, Q.C.	5,000 kilos	P2.00/kilo
10.	White scrap Papers (obsolete continues form, 5 ply 14" x 9½")	MWSS Balara, Q.C.	1 lot (2,228 boxes)	P88,931.06 (1 lot)
11.	Office Desks, Tables, Cabinets, and other Wooden Furnitures	MWSS Balara, Q.C.	1 lot	P15,000.00 (1 lot)
12.	THW Electrical Cable & PVC Insulation	MWSS Balara, Q.C.	386 kilos	P176.30/kilo

Interested parties may secure the General Terms and Condition of this bidding, and the Bid Form, from the MWSS Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) located at the address below upon payment of non-refundable amount of Php 1,000.00, starting December 8 until December 15, 2005:

Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
Engineering & Project Management Department
Ground Floor, MWSS Complex
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Telefax: 929-6988 / 922-2568

The bids must be submitted to the BAC in sealed envelope, one (1) original and two (2) duplicate copies, on or before **2:00 p.m. of December 19, 2005.** The bundy clock located at the above address shall serve as the basis for the official time for this bidding. Bids received after the above deadline shall no longer be accepted. The bids will be opened by the BAC at 2:15 p.m. on the same date in the presence of and the bidders, or their duly authorized representatives, and the general public.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be conducted at the above address, at 10:00 a.m. on **December 16, 2005**, and thereafter a joint site inspection will follow.

(ORIGINAL SIGNED)
ORLANDO C. HONDRADE
Administrator

(PDI - Dec. 7 & 14, 2005)

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Ecozone measures up for scrutiny

By Michelle V. Remo and Ronnel W. Domingo

A HOUSE COMMITTEE YESTERDAY APproved for deliberations two bills seeking to grant tax amnesty to firms doing business in the former US military installations, and qualify them for fiscal incentives.

The committee on ways and means approved House Bill No. 4900, which covers the tax amnesty on all deficiency taxes, as well as duties, interests, surcharges and penalties the locators in Camp John Hay and Clark Field incurred as a consequence of a recent Supreme Court ruling.

The second bill, HB No. 4901, seeks to grant concerned locators with the fiscal incentives enjoyed by firms registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza).

The high tribunal earlier ruled that among the economic zones created by the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA), only the one in Subic should be covered by the fiscal incentives granted under Republic Act No. 9227. The law does not grant the same incentives to other economic zones, the Supreme Court said.

The high court ruling therefore made the locators in Clark, Camp John Hay and other smaller economic zones—such as the Poro Point Special Economic Zone and Morong Special Economic Zone—liable for back taxes and duties that run into billions of pesos.

The American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines yesterday said new laws granting tax amnesty and incentives to investors in the economic zones need to be passed to protect firms that were enticed to locate there.

AmCham executive director Robert Sears said a number of member firms, including two Fortune 500 companies, have invested in the Clark SEZ over the past decade.

Sears said the the removal of the tax incentives would have serious consequences. It could cause the firms to reconsider their decision to invest in the Philippines and relocate elsewhere in the region.

For First Pacific, it's back to square one

By Clarissa S. Batino

FIRST PACIFIC CO. LTD., A HONG KONG-based conglomerate owned by the Salim family, will use its $200-million warchest to scout for other possible acquisitions in the food, telco and infrastructure business across the region, its top official said.

First Pacific managing director Manuel Pangilinan said the company would move forward after it failed in its bid to acquire Del Monte Pacific.

The Lorenzo family sold its 49 percent stake in Del Monte to San Miguel Corp. and NutriAsia of Jose Campos, thwarting First Pacific's plans.

Now, the company's back to square one, Pangilinan said.

Not the type to cry over spilled milk, Pangilinan said that there are several companies ripe for acquisition all over the region.

In the Philippines alone, he said, there are numerous opportunities especially in infrastructure and power.

"We are still focusing on food, telco and infrastructure," Pangilinan said in an interview.

Pangilinan founded First Pacific in the early 1980s using the capital of Indonesia's Salim family.

First Pacific's warchest came from the proceeds of its $200-million, five-year zero coupon bonds early this year, which are exchangeable into shares of PLDT.

Be at the NOKIA Imagenation
On December 9, 10 & 11
at the Glorietta Activity Center

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MONTRE

E-mail: pr_motoring@inquirer.com.ph

MOTORING

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

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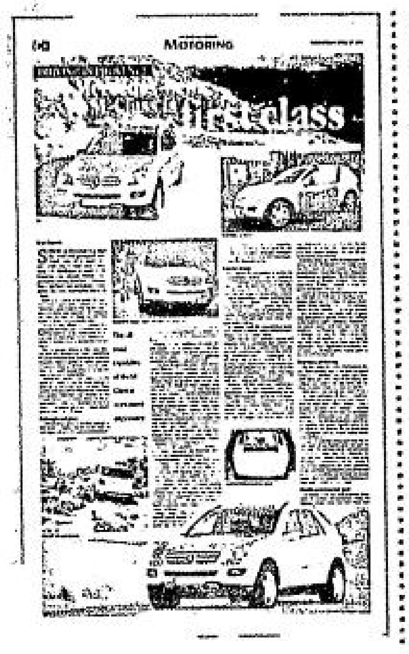
REX TATLONGHARI

MOST IMPROVED PARTS

Something notable about Special Sections



MOTORING

PROPERTY

Ayala Land redefines family leisure with "Anvaya Cove"

A sense of living in the world's best places

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Use your coconuts

Healthy snacks for school kids

Math in trading

By Cesar Mangawang

A YEAR AFTER THE redesign of the Special Sections—Motoring, Property and Science/Health—they were cited by INQUIRER editor in chief Letty J. Magsanoc as the most improved parts of the paper.

Even INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez made special mention of this during a recent general assembly meeting.

Driving designs

As part of the redesign, INQUIRER art and design director Lynett Villariba, conceptualized a more attractive section flag for Motoring. The two simple O's were replaced by a tire and a steering wheel. A special logo was also created for article on Test Drive, show

SOMETHING/ B2-2

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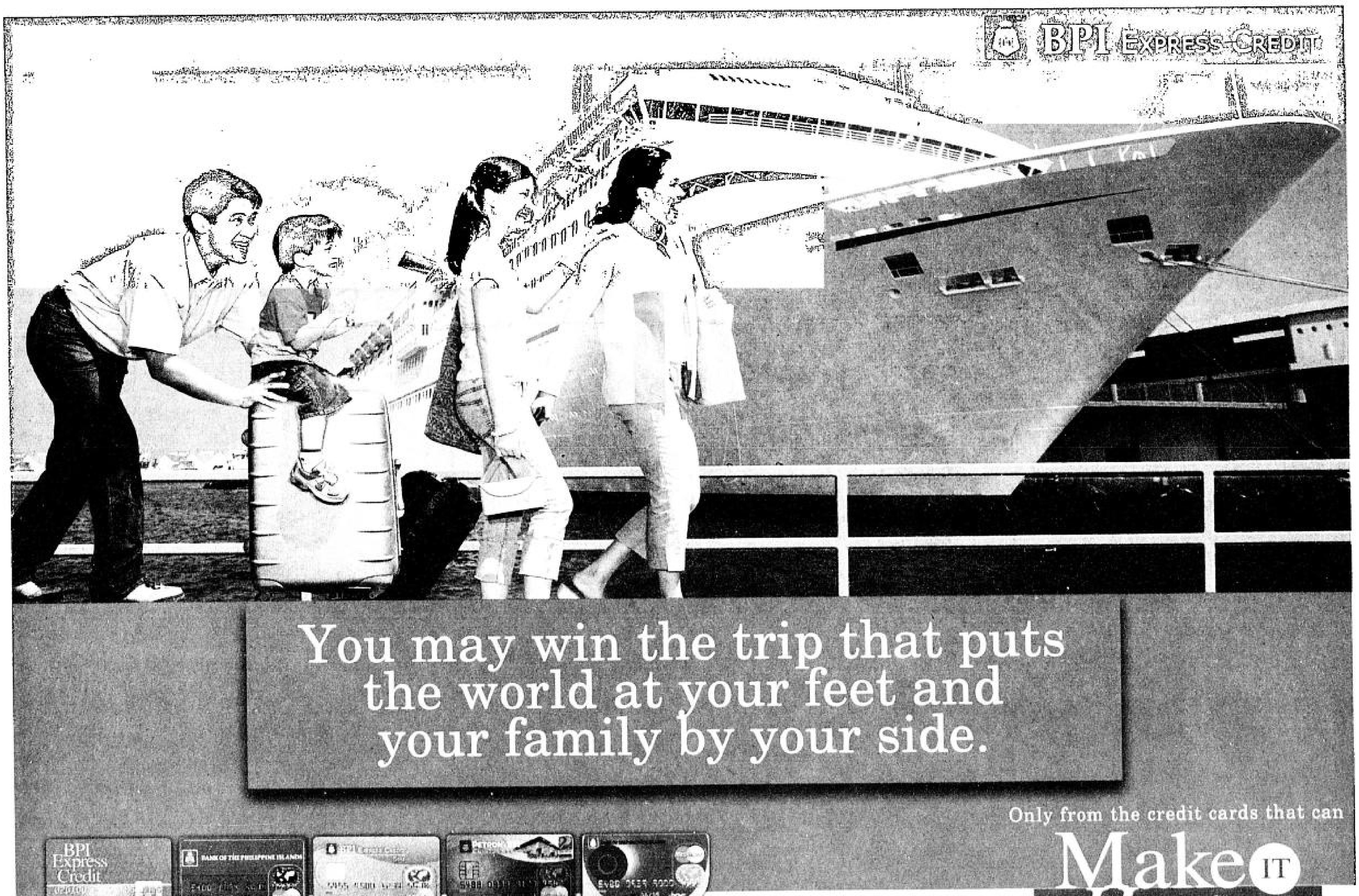

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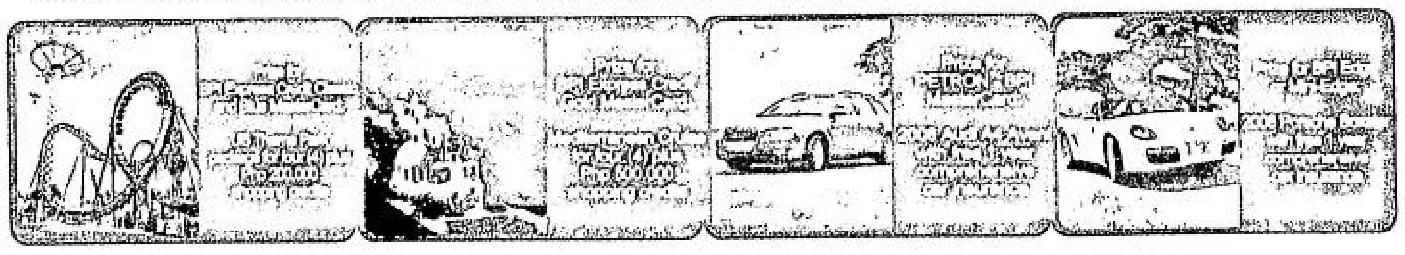

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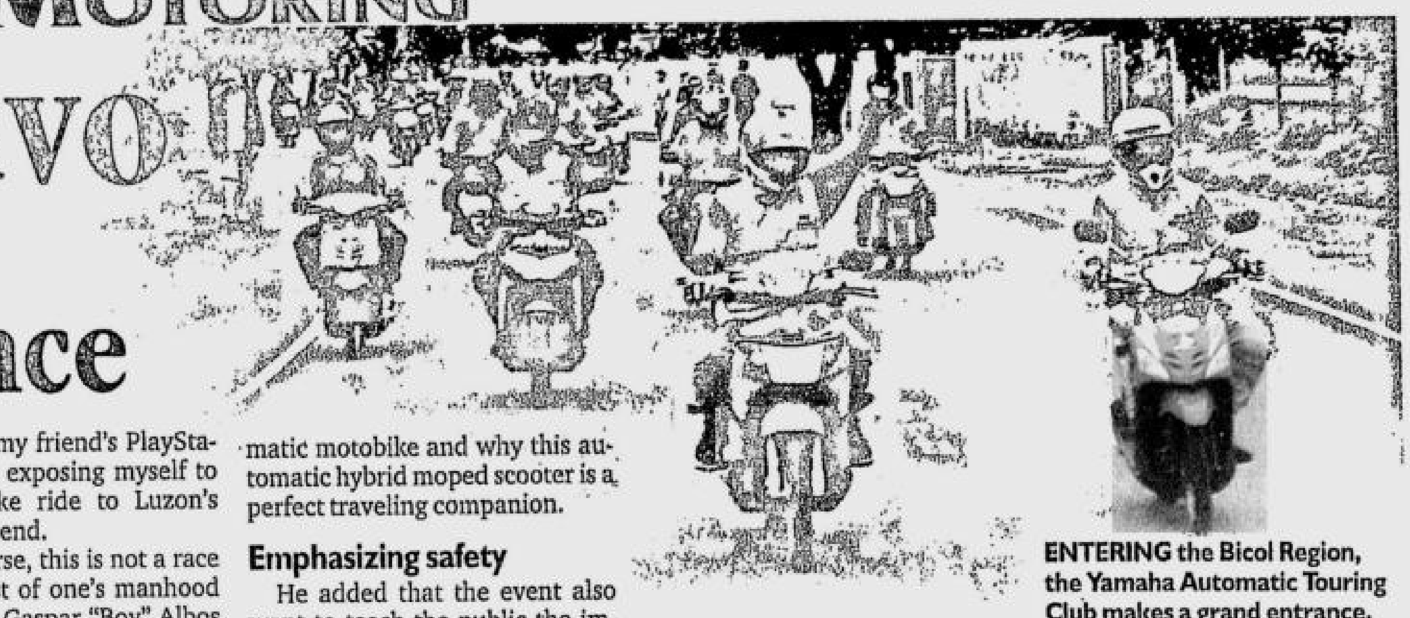

ENTERING the Bicol Region, the Yamaha Automatic Touring Club makes a grand entrance.

WITH THE IMAGE the Nuovo has already established nationwide, Norkis-Yamaha hopes to tighten its grip on the market.

By Charles E. Buban

HURTLING PAST cars, provincial buses as well as 18-wheeler trucks at 80 kph and with rain pelting my helmet like pebbles hitting GI roofs, thoughts of doubt briefly entered my mind: am I really doing this?

Should I not be here? Should I have mastered the video game Moto GP on my friend's PlayStation 2 before exposing myself to this motorbike ride to Luzon's southeastern end.

But of course, this is not a race or even a test of one's manhood as what Jose Gaspar "Boy" Albos Jr., Norkis-Yamaha's SVP for marketing, emphasized when he invited me to join the Yamaha Automatic Touring Club's trip to Bulan, Sorsogon early this month.

According to Albos, the two-day bike ride—covering 662 kilometers—is more of a fun ride to promote Yamaha's latest automatic motobike and why this automatic hybrid moped scooter is a perfect traveling companion.

Emphasizing safety

He added that the event also want to teach the public the importance of wearing safety gear as well as respecting traffic rules, which is most often forgotten by a lot of motorbike riders.

"If you want to be respected by other motorists and pedestrian, you have to look smart and respectable," Albos said.

Albos also assured this writer that there's nothing complicated with the Nouvo.

"It's powered by a newly designed air-cooled overhead camshaft, single-cylinder 115 cc engine and with a continuously variable transmission, you don't have to worry about shifting gears," explained Albos.

But of course, uncomplicated the Nouvo may be, Albos reminded that each participant should be fit physically and mentally since one has to spend the whole day driving and will be exposed to all sorts of weather conditions

YAMAHA/ B2-4

Something notable . . .

From page B2-1

ing part of the dashboard and the steering wheel.

Two real estate scenes were used on both sides of the Property section flag to make it more enticing. For feng shui articles, a *bagua* (pronounced ba-gwa), which is an octagonal diagram with eight trigrams on each side, was used.

For the Science/Health section, a special logo was made for Kids' Quiz.

Innovations

The art designs were specially created for various innovations the Special Sections group had in mind.

Today, the Property section, has columns like "Feng Shui" and "Amazing Structures," both written by Dianne Villafuerte. Started in October last year, "Feng Shui" features how the basic concepts of feng shui can be applied to home design and workplace layout. "Amazing Structures" showcases unusual architectural designs.

To enhance the Property section, three columnists were added—architects Amado de Jesus and Marcos de Guzman, as well as interior designer Pinky Cruz, writing the columns "Green Architrends," "Living Architecture" and "Into Space," respectively.

To encourage children to read the Science/Health section, the Kids' Quiz appeared for several months last year. The regular quiz was capped by a special contest that ran for two months. Every week, eight Sony Ericsson cell phones and a gift pack were given away.

Motoring now includes a new column for young motorists, "My Drift" by Andre Palma, who used to engage in motor sports.

The Motoring section, which used to come out every Thursday, now appears on Wednesday. From its Tuesday schedule, the Property section has been moved to Saturday.

The only section which retained its Saturday schedule is Science/Health.

Other columns

The Motoring columns are "On the Road" by Aida Sevilla-Mendoza and "Full Tank" by Al Mendoza.

For Science, the columns are "Eureka" by Queena Lee-Chua, "Discover" by Massie Santos-Ballon, "Medical Files" by Dr. Rafael Castillo, M.D., and "Ask the Dentist" by Dr. Paul R. de Castro, D.M.D.

For Real Estate, UP professor Alexis Acacio used to write "Building Dreams," an informative column on house construction which included tips for buying your dream house.

Awards

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza's "On the Road" won the Henry Ford Journalism Award's Best Column last year, the first time the award was given.

In 2003, Tessa R. Salazar won three Ford awards, a first-time achievement for an individual. She won the Best Auto Innovation Story ("Outdoorsy executive's guardian on wheels"), Best Auto Industry Story ("Relics of war reborn, thanks to RP ingenuity") and Best Auto Event Story ("Groundwork for future drives starts with a joystick").

In 2001, she won a Ford award for the Best Auto Innovation/Auto Event Story ("Get rid of the blind spot for safe driving").

This year Queena Lee-Chua was cited as Best Science and Technology Columnist during the National Science and Technology Week awarding and closing ceremonies at the Philippine Trade and Training Center.

Charles Buban was named Most Outstanding Health Journalist by the National Press Club and was awarded the Health Journalism Award 2004 by Sanofi Synthe Lab.

When the INQUIRER still carried an Agribusiness section, Joe Burgos' column "Sa Kabukiran" won the Best Agriculture Column in Filipino several times.

Shortly before its last appearance in January 1998, Agribusiness was awarded the Binhi Award for Best Agriculture Section in a Newspaper, the first time the entries were monitored by the award-giving body.

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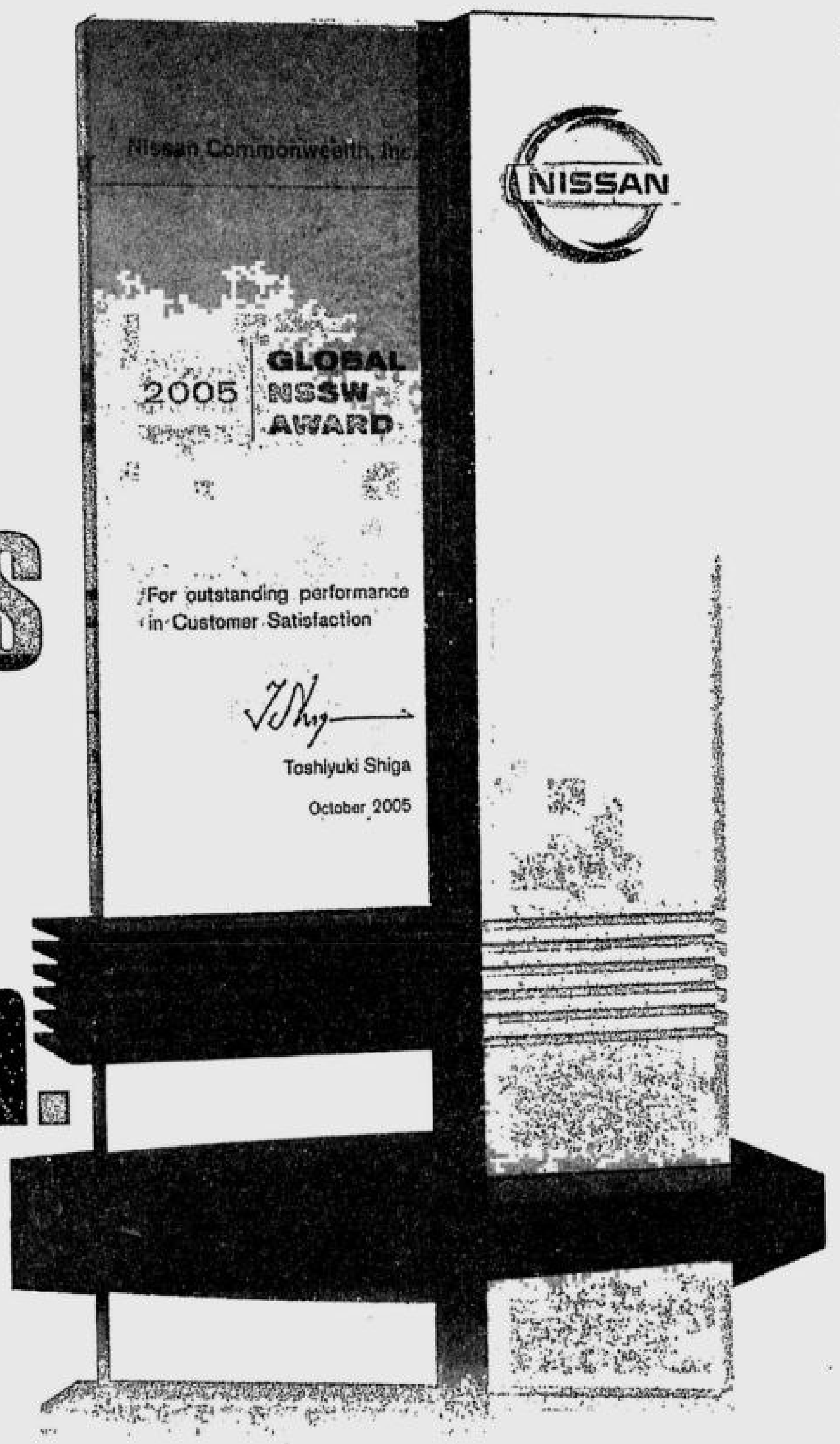
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For outstanding performance in Customer Satisfaction
Toshiyuki Shiga
October 2005

NISSAN COMMONWEALTH COO accepts the global award from NISSAN MOTOR COMPANY, Ltd.COO. NCWI Chief Operating Officer Leo Anthony P. San Juan proudly accepts the 2005 GLOBAL NSSW AWARD for outstanding Customer Satisfaction from Nissan COO Toshiyuki Shiga at ceremonies held at the Tokyo Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, Japan in October 2005. With Mr. San Juan is his wife Janeth.

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A challenge completed

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, MANY of Manila's leading media outfits will be replete with the news of the action from the culminating round of this year's Media Challenge. The winners, both team and individual, will receive their just congratulations; their speed and skill will be extolled no doubt.

Some might even point to next year, promising to defend the title or boldly predict a shift in the winners circle. I would be lying if I said the question of a drive was something that I did not at all ponder. Most, this author included, look forward to a continuation of this series—in whatever shape, form or magnitude.

What will not see the light of press are some poignant, defining moments that helped shape the Media Challenge. Being behind the pit walls instead of the cockpit this season has given me a unique perspective, one that has made for quite a few memories. Rather than being concerned with my own track times and driving technique, playing the role of an organizer has allowed an interesting viewpoint. The drama of human experience played past my assigned post, as safety scrutineer and pregrid control.

Insight into personalities

Seeing the veterans dealing with the pressure and stress of racing is always an insight into people's personalities. Adrenaline and stomach acid are curiously dealt with in varying degrees of effectivity and reason. Most of the old Challenge hands dissipated stress with animated humor and this, in itself, served a purpose, as it helped color the entire event with a fun, lively patina.

A few, the fast few, chose to suffer their stress silently, even just for a few moments before their runs. It can be said that the key to time-trialing is to be able to deal effectively with both the long lulls of waiting one's turn and the instant, intense excitement of the actual drive.

More than those who were able to display increasing speed and a growing understanding of the dynamics of track and car, it is the series' rookies that have shown me what the Media Challenge is all about. Many have never been in a structured environment of basic performance driving instruction, practice and competition.

Still a motoring student

There were times when I saw myself in these new competitors; their questions were the same, their mistakes all too familiar but there was also a critical eagerness to learn and improve.

I cut my driving teeth with this very event quite some time ago and it has helped put both my drive and frame of mind as a motoring writer in perspective. To this day, I am still a student of motoring just like the day I was first unceremoniously strapped into a bucket seat, and asked to beat the clock.

Credit should also rightfully go to those who imparted their skills and knowledge, allowing an excited, one-time young enthusiast to learn and eventually become better at both driving and putting the experience down on paper.

Honestly, there is some slight sense of relief that the five trackdays are over and done with. Fumbling about in the dark, getting ready at 3 in the morning is not my exact idea of fun. My Saturdays are my own again and the early morning wake-up calls will be, albeit bittersweet, something of the past.

Notion of piquant sadness

There is a notion of piquant sadness that comes with this reprieve. My fellow instructors and organizers will no longer have the benefit of watching the drizzling dawn break over the track at Carmona, as we shuffle about, making preparations for the participants to arrive and drive.

No longer will there be decisions about track layout and safety controls, like the notorious extra chicanes and pylon gates: Gone are the sweep drives, tugging at the limit, checking if the course for the given day passes as both challenging and friendly enough for all the levels of competitor skill and motivation.

This Challenge has grown from incipience to history. Many will remember this as the first media tarmac test of this scale and execution. To the winners go the spoils and glory; my balaclava goes off to these people for their skill and capacity for true speed.

The balance of the field will have a year to wait, ponder and reassess what they need in order to find those fleeting seconds essential for success. Thanks go to them for the open-mindedness and the will to get better. For us behind the scenes, we will eagerly wait another year, as we take both pride and pleasure in helping stage the Media Challenge.

MEET THE NEW ACCENT

Hyundai paves the road for the rebirth of ACCENT. The New Accent struts the streets with its stylish blend of refinement, toughness, integrity, flexibility, and eco-friendliness guaranteed to be a winning package for its worldwide customers. With Hyundai's most impressive history of market dominance and uncompromised innovativeness, along with its adoption of meaningful technology, the New Accent is refined to be simply outstanding.

It all began with the Pony in 1975. The first generation Accent stormed the market, making Hyundai the leading car maker in Korea. Seven years later, the Pony had undergone a facelift that captured overseas attention that set off the new model launch of Pony Excel later in 1985. Astounding progress continued with the 1989 refreshed new model followed shortly by the introduction of the Accent in 1994, carrying on Hyundai's remarkable story. After 5 years. Hyundai gave Accent a new birth making it a premium small car equipped with class-leading safety features and performances ably keeping its success from their very first model.

Now, Hyundai welcomes the New Accent -the 6th generation of cars to finally surge the long-waiting streets. The New Accent transcends each preceding model taking into full account the higher expectations of its customers across all markets. It offers lower NVH, higher fuel efficiency, improved ride, road-holding and performance, superior ergonomics, and comfort features all clad in elegant styling.

EXTERIOR STYLING

The New Accent has a clean, sleek, and modern styling that equates to its high quality. The rounded and well proportioned lines, moderately flared wheel arches, strong shoulder lines, wide spaced hood character lines, and flowing windscreen treatment give the impression of character, dynamism, and strength with a sporty nature. Looks great in the showroom but irresistible in the streets.

Solid appeal also comes from its smooth side profile, well proportioned doors, a distinctive waist line molding, and sophisticated aerodynamics. A true profile of character marked by strength and charisma.

INTERIOR STYLING

Comforting, practical, and stylish interiors await the New Accent driver. New shades and textures add a fresh ambience to fully match its exceptional exteriors. It is furnished with a wrap-around styling, finely tempered metal garnish, versatile crash pad, and a unique center fascia -all contributing to ample interior space, driving comfort, and control.

Front passenger environment is composed of an enhances instrument panel with larger meters and gauges with easier to read LED lit instruments, cooling and heating controls along with power outlets, are strategically arranged for optimal convenience.

The New Accent provides exceptional personal storage for front and rear passengers. Door mounted map pockets, deep glove box and front seat back pockets, are all accessible. Also having more headroom, higher seating position, enlarged shoulder and hip room, the well organized and well illuminated spaciousness of the New Accent gives its passengers an experience at par with morel luxurious cars.

PERFORMANCE

The New Accent's state-of-the-art technology harmonizes economy and power for further mileage, reliability, and longevity. It has a redesigned 5-speed manual gearbox that combines fuel economy, acceleration, smoothness, and power.

The new 1.5 VGT diesel engine is truly state-of-the-art having been designed and developed with input from the Hyundai Motor Company R&D facility in Rüsselheim.

SAFETY

Passive and active safety is apparent in the New Accent. Reinforced bulkheads, pillars and side impact structures, front three-point seatbelts with dual pre-tensioners, and load limiters assure confidence under any condition.

CONVENIENCE

Excellent interior air management is a hallmark of the New Accent. Cooling and ventilation controls are easily reached and managed.

The six-speaker Audio system has also been perfected by its engineers to deliver superb sound quality.

The all new Hyundai Accent is priced beginning at P 748,000.00. Available at Hyundai dealerships nationwide, the Accent comes in six exciting colors: Ebony Black, Space Silver, Midnight Gray, Wine Red, Gold Beige, and Blue Onyx.

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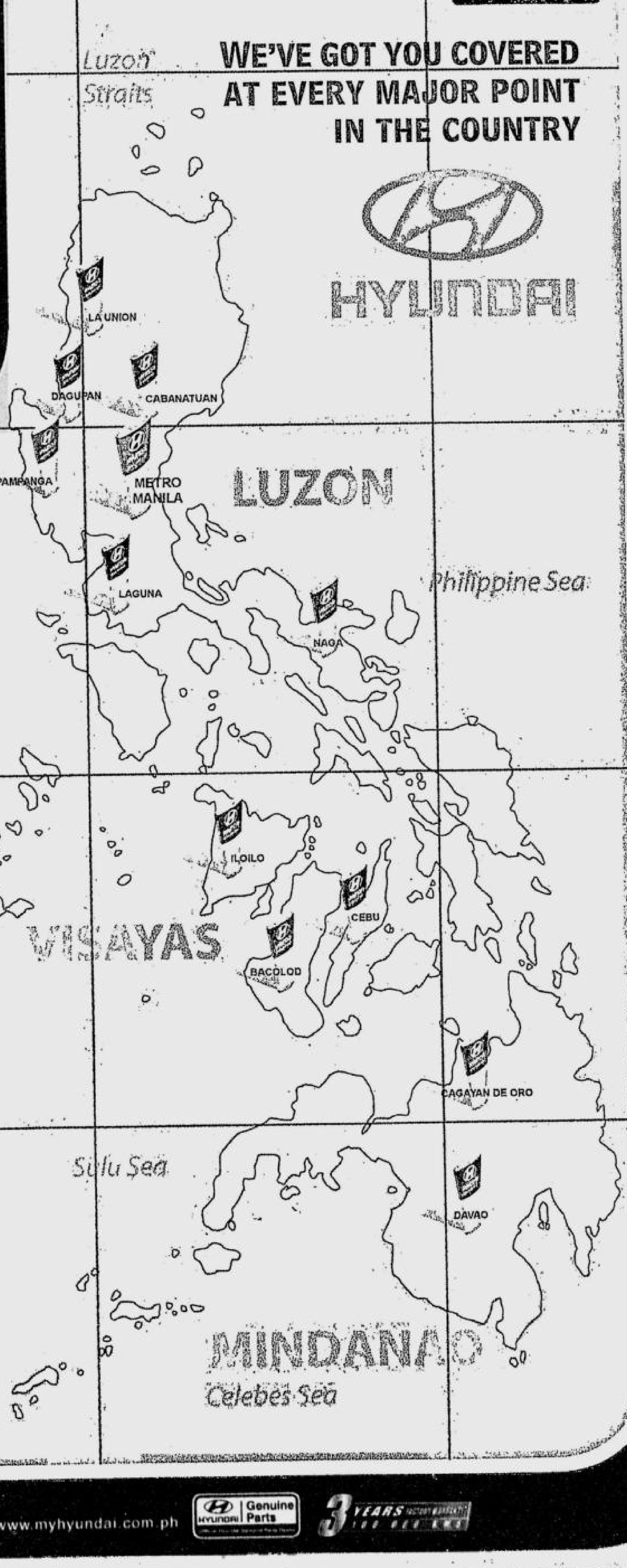

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The 2006 Audi A4: balance with 'mojo'

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

THE 2006 AUDI A4, WITH ITS NEW BIG-mouth grille and upgraded powertrain, poses a fresh challenge to the leading brands in the entry-luxury/premium compact car market.

This is a real driver's car, exuding *abilidad* with in-your-face *mojo*. Behind the aggressive-looking grille—the most obvious exterior revision of the A4—lurks a 2.0-liter naturally aspirated 4-cylinder gasoline engine that replaces the 1.8-liter of the previous model. Linked to a smooth-shifting seven-speed automatic tranny, the new A4's engine delivers 130 hp when it hits 6,000 revs and 190 Newton meters of torque at 1,800 revs. Audi claims that zero to 100 kph takes 9.8 seconds.

Fuel economy is claimed to be 10 km per liter in city driving, 13 km per liter on the highway.

Mouthy grille

The mouthy grille harks back to the Auto-Union racers of the 1930s and signals the sporty, fun-to-drive character of the A4. Although the '06 model has basically the same platform, elegant leather-clad interior and overall dimensions as its predecessor, the suspension has been reworked to include a few components from the high-performance Audi S4, such as the 50/50 power split between the front and rear wheels.

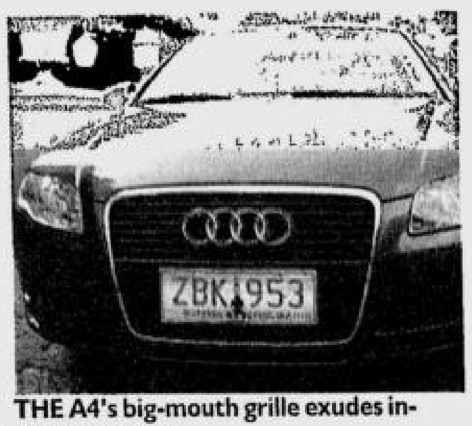
Balanced

On the road, I found the A4 to be an exhilaratingly balanced car, steering precisely, handling sharply and sitting flat through fast turns with minimal body roll. In true Audi tradition, it is luxuriously comfortable for daily driving as the suspension soaks up most bumps and potholes. Steering wheel-mounted gear shift paddles add to driving delight. In short, the A4 displays impressive driving dynamics with near perfect balance of the engine and transmission combination, steering and braking, ride and handling.

On the minus side, the A4 is short on low-end torque and backseat space is tight. Some of the sophisticated controls on the dash take time to master. If you opt for the S-line package, handling is even better but the ride becomes firmer, even choppy, according to road test reviews. Quattro all-wheel-drive (AWD), which provides extra grip, is another expensive option.

8 airbags

A full suite of safety features is standard in the A4: eight airbags, electronic traction control Version 8, 4-wheel antilock brakes (ABS) and electronic stabilization program including acceleration skid control. The A4 was rated four stars for front-occupant protection in government frontal crash tests, five stars for front occupants in side-impact tests and four stars for rear occupants.

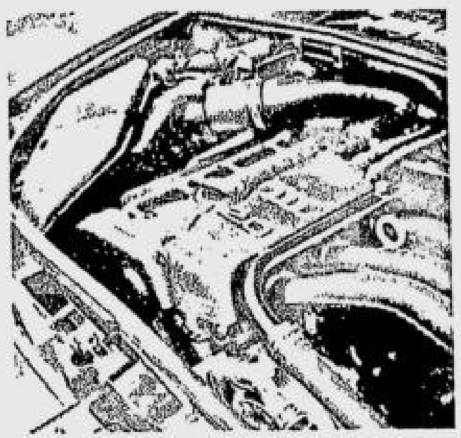


THE A4's big-mouth grille exudes in-your-face mojo

The excellent fit and finish, solid, Teutonic-taut construction and indisputably high-quality materials of the A4 inside and out are commensurate with its lofty price (P2,650,000). Still, its price is reasonable compared to its major fellow German rival's in the premium compact car segment. You may soon see more Audi A4s on the roads of Metro Manila as Audi's newly appointed distributor, PGA Cars, revs up to match the car's formidable façade in terms of marketing initiatives.

A more potent A4, the turbocharged 2.0 liter yielding 200 horsepower, is slated to arrive next year with a P2,990,000 price tag. Since the turbo version has the same award-winning engine as the Volkswagen Golf GTI (Audi is the premium car affiliate of VW), it might be worth the wait and the additional pesos. It won the engine of the year award in the 1.8- to 2.0-liter class at the International Engine of the Year Awards, which are judged by a panel of motoring journalists with combined experience from over 26 countries.

GET USED to the A4's sophisticated controls (PHOTOS BY AIDA SEVILLA MENDOZA)



THE A4's 2.0-liter naturally aspirated

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Age is a high price to pay for maturity.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.

SEA Games winners

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

THE BIGGEST WINNER IN THE JUST-concluded 23rd SEA Games are not the gold medalists.

The biggest winner is the Filipino.

The everyday Filipino was in the Games all throughout.

The gasoline boy that filled tanks of vehicles used in the Games was an unsung hero. But he was a hero nonetheless.

The Filipino is the driver that brought athletes to their battlefields to win their much-desired gold medals. He was an unsung hero, but a hero nonetheless.

The Filipino race was the biggest winner after overcoming tremendous odds in successfully staging the biggest sports conclave in Southeast Asia.

Hosting the SEA Games is no joke. To have staged it successfully was teamwork at its best. The government worked in unison with the private sector, whose robust financial support ensured that only the best were fielded in.

The strategy worked. And the entire nation emerged the biggest winner.

* * *

Speaking of gasoline, or diesel for that matter, I got this report about personnel from the Department of Energy alleging harassing instead of helping our small entrepreneurs in earning a decent income.

I cite a particular case reported to me in which a diesel dealer somewhere in Marikina was being charged P20,000 for merely not posting a sign in his station that reads: "Stop engine while filling."

If true, why isn't that thoroughly stupid, if not absolutely anti-people?

"We were never ever given a warning," said the diesel dealer. "They claimed they inspected my station in May, but I do not have a record of it, and neither could they show proof they inspected my station. This is pure and simple harassment. The Department of Energy should look into its personnel abusing their powers."

He said the penalty included not posting a sign saying cell phones should not be used while inside the refueling station.

Truth is, there is no scientific proof that cell phones can cause explosions in a gasoline station. That is a myth upheld by world experts doing research on the relationship of cell phones and fossil fuel.

Paging our Energy officials?

* * *

I am up here in Baguio, the city of fond memories in my youth, covering the 56th Fil-Am Golf championship while acting as rules official at the same time. As such, I would miss Christmas parties usually hosted by dear friends from the automotive industry, among them Albert Arcilla, Loi Concepcion and Lyn Buena of Volvo, and Arnel Doria and his Honda angels Tin Tin, Sheryl and Carla. Likewise, I will miss the Isuzu bash, a shebang I also always look forward to during the season.

Best effort, guys and dolls. Oh, if I could only be in two places at the same time.

* * *

Back to the SEA Games.

Some athletes and spectators alike expressed delight when they saw and used for the first time the new North Luzon Expressway on their way to Clark and Subic, which both hosted several events in the SEA Games.

They couldn't believe their eyes that such a Third World country like the Philippines now boasts of a world-class expressway.

One keen observer, though, noticed the practice of requiring motorists using the NLEX to pay twice-one in Balintawak and another when exiting.

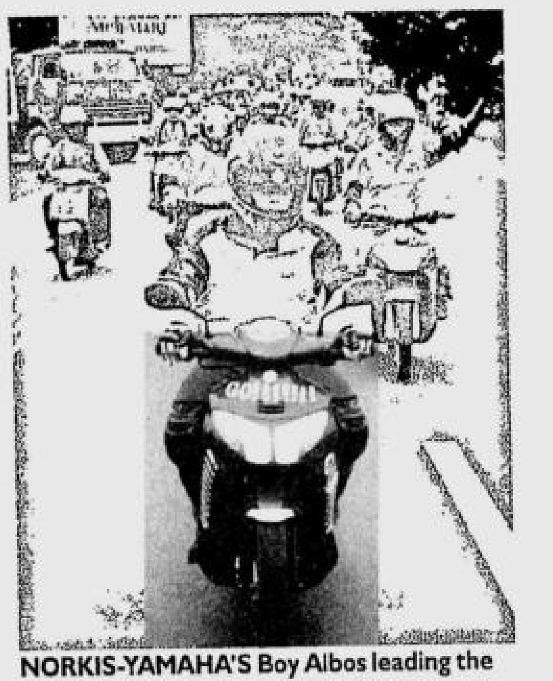
Honestly, I do not know the rationale behind it.

Can you enlighten us on this, my dear Marlene (Ochoa)?

Marlene, of course, is the chief spokesperson of NLEX—a most friendly doll, I must say.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Only a jerk would insist on staying on the "overtaking lane only" when he is being asked to give way to a much faster vehicle wishing to pass him/her.



NORKIS-YAMAHA'S Boy Albos leading the pack of automatic motorbike riders.

Yamaha Nouvo. . .

From page B2-2

as well as challenges on the road (slippery pavement, oncoming vehicles, crossing children and even dogs).

Hesitant

Initially, I was a bit hesitant about the whole trip since this will be my first time to ride on this type of motorbike and secondly, my most recent—and very first ride—was on a 150 cc scooter to Tagaytay City some two months ago.

However, the Nouvo made things so much easier for me. The Nouvo's (derived from the French word "nouveau" or new) newly designed frame creates a new genre of commuter motorbike that offers the same level of ride as a moped, the same level of comfort as a scooter and whose extensive line of original Yamaha parts will allow its owner to accessorize.

This writer loves the fact that it's light but not wobbly at high speeds. In fact, after driving it for 30 minutes I was very comfortable at 60 kph and then after driving it for a few hours I was already clocking at 80 kph (although not consistently as I don't want to push my luck too far).

I was so confident, too, that I was already banking the Nouvo on the curves (with the guidance of fellow motoring journalist and expert motorcyclist Aris Ilagan) that typify the highway snaking through the provinces of Quezon, Camarines Sur and Camarines Norte.

Interesting machine

"The Nouvo is truly an interesting machine—we, too, had mixed feelings about the motorbike when we first bought it a couple of years ago," said Nonoy Cabrera, YATC president, who with his 40-strong contingent joined Albos in the Sorsogon trip.

He related that since most of YATC members owned or still own bigger bikes, they were surprised of the Nouvo's performance.

"Compared to big bikes, the Nouvo is much efficient—its 47 km to a liter consumption plus its 4.9-liter tank capacity ensured the group lesser number of trips to gasoline stations," said Cabrera.

In fact, Cabrera reported they just spent around P1,000 for their fuel during an earlier ocular visit to Bulan, an amount which could be much higher had they rode on their big bikes.

"We don't have to spend so much on fuel and this is why we enjoyed so much going around the countryside riding on this motorbike," said Cabrera who related the Sorsogon trip was YATC's fifth tour this year, having gone to Vigan in Ilocos Sur, Daet in Camarines Norte, Tuguegarao in Cagayan and Tagaytay in Cavite.

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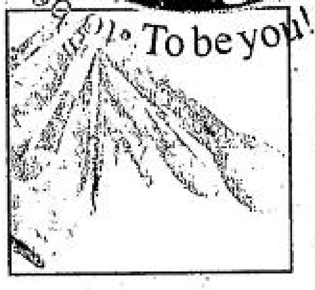
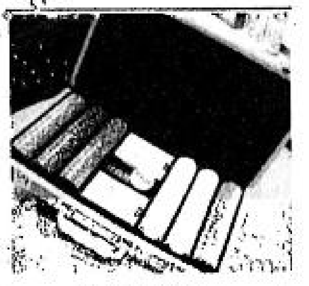
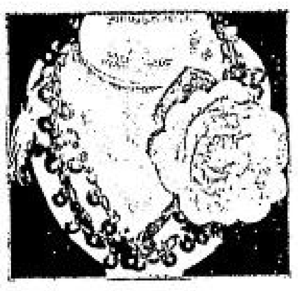
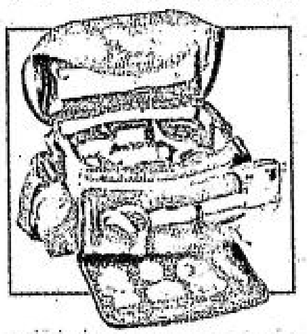
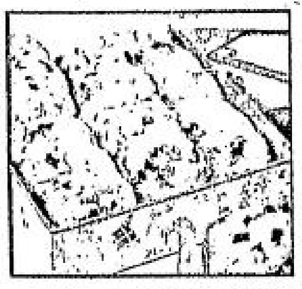
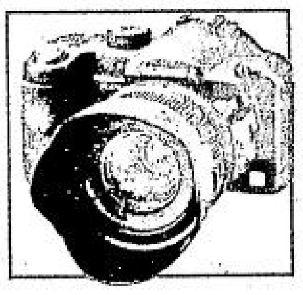
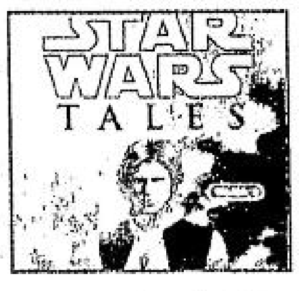





Last week we tried to help you in your quest to fill stockings by presenting ideas for the different people in your life.
Because we know your holiday shopping isn't done yet, we have more gift ideas in this second installment of your 2bU! Christmas Catalogue.

This week we have gift ideas for music lovers, comic-book fans, makeup mavens, accessories collectors, Havaianas addicts, caffeine junkies, shutterbugs and people who refuse to grow up.
We applaud your desire to play Santa for the people you love. Happy shopping!

COMET'S TAIL




myGLOBE GAME ZONE

PINOY PLAYERS RULE WORLD CYBER GAMES!

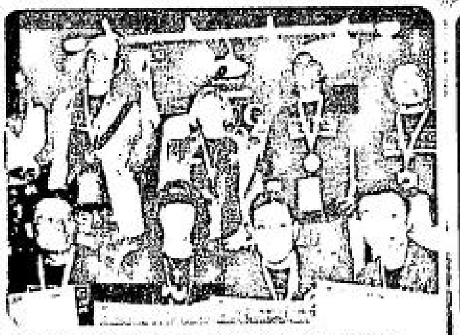
Talk about the fast and the furious! Young Pinoys Paolo Castro, Paul Antonio, and Rene Manguerra exhibited high-octane gaming skills at the recently concluded World Cyber Games (WCG) Mobile Tournament held at the Suntec Convention Centre in Singapore.

The young men were the official mobile phone players sent by myGlobe GameZone after they beat out hundreds of other mobile gaming enthusiasts in the local gaming scene during the WCG Philippine Mobile Tournament held last November 6. Each player topped and mastered the official GameZone JAVA games to join this massive competition for mobile phone gamers. Twenty-three-year-old Paolo Castro owned the street-racing action of *Midtown Madness 3*; twenty-year-old Paul Antonio mastered the endurance challenge set by *Chopper Rescue*, and Rene Manguerra memorized his Kung Fu arcade combos for *Bruce Lee*.

The Asian and World Finals of the WCG Mobile Tournament in Singapore, however, proved to be a challenging feat for the three Pinoy contenders as they faced different gamers from all over the world. "Our opponents were really tough since they were the best players from their respective countries," recalled Paolo. "Each one had their own unpredictable tactic up their sleeves, so I really didn't think that I would actually do well in this competition!" And do well he did. Paolo took home US$3,000 for being the 1st place winner in the Asia finals, and US$1,000 for being the 2nd place winner in the world finals of the *Midtown Madness 3* category. Paul, meanwhile, bagged $1,000 for being the second place winner in the world finals of the *Chopper Rescue* category.

"I think the edge of Filipino gamers during the convention is we have what we call *'diskarte.'* We have a knack for learning superior techniques and game secrets easily and fast!" Paolo mused. "Chalk it up to countless hours downloading and playing games from myGlobe GameZone!"

Be a WCG-class gamer and level up your own JAVA gaming skills with myGlobe GameZone. Take your pick from the gamut of exciting games now available from myGlobe GameZone. Just key in **GAMES** and send to 2992 or visit myGlobe WAPsite and go to the GameZone link.

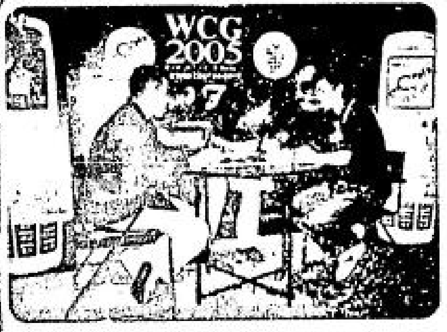

LORDS OF THE MOBILE-GAMING ARENA... Pinoy gamers Paul Antonio and Paolo Castro join the other Grand Finals winners of the 2005 WCG Mobile Tournament.

PINOY PRIDE! The myGlobe GameZone team with Paul Antonio, Paolo Castro and Rene Manguerra.

Paul Antonio with mobile phone gamers from India, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Paolo Castro and Paul Antonio with gaming friends from India and Malaysia.

ASIA'S BEST MOBILE GAMER for Midtown Madness 3! Paolo Castro is awarded a medal.


FIERCE MOBILE GAMING ACTION! Paolo Castro in action versus his Singaporean opponent during the Asia Finals.

PINOY HARDCORE GAMERS Rene Manguerra, Paul Antonio, and Paolo Castro

Meet the WCG-Asia Mobile Tournament Champ

Name: Paolo Antonio C. Castro

In-game name: loogz

Age: 23

School/Job: IT Support Specialist

Dream job: I would love to be an international music artist!

Game formats usually played: PC, PlayStation2, and myGlobe GameZone games

Favorite game/s of all time: *Final Fantasy VII*, *Final Fantasy X*, *Dance Dance Revolution*, *ex2dancer*, and, of course, myGlobe GameZone's *Midtown Madness 3*!

Mobile game you played the longest: Definitely myGlobe GameZone's *Midtown Madness 3* because I had to practice a lot for the tournament. Thankfully, it's in my cellphone so I can practice wherever and whenever I can!

Favorite GameZone java games: The *Yetisports* series and *Battle for Titan* are the best!

Most memorable experience in WCG Singapore: Eating different kinds of food like frog legs, deer meat, and grass juice!

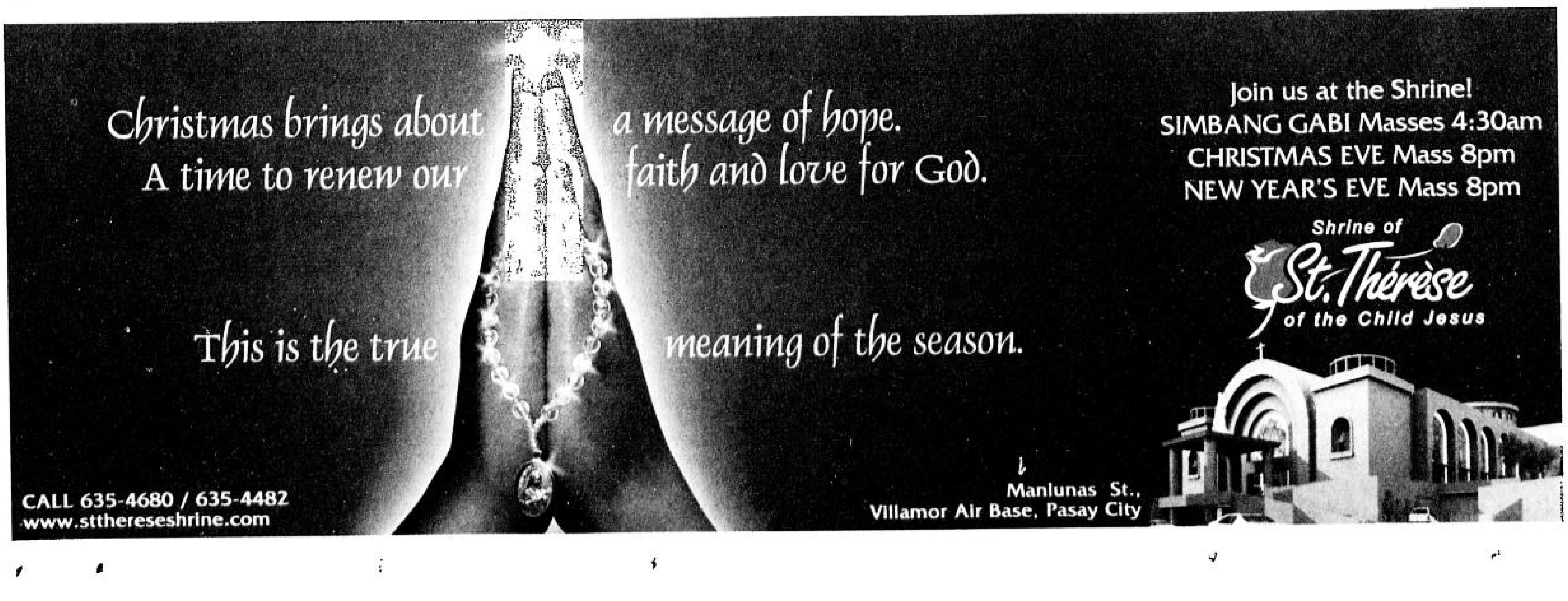
Places you visited in Singapore: The Science Center, Sim Lim Square, and some shopping malls like the one in Suntec. I was also able to ride their MRT a couple of times.

Your plans on your cash prize: I'll probably treat my friends and family out, and save what's left until I really need it.

Any plans of joining next year's competition? Yes, I would want to join if possible. It has been a great experience for me!

With special thanks to:

Jet Asia
indiagames ltd.
WCG WORLD CYBER GAMES mobile tournament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A time to renew our faith and love for God.
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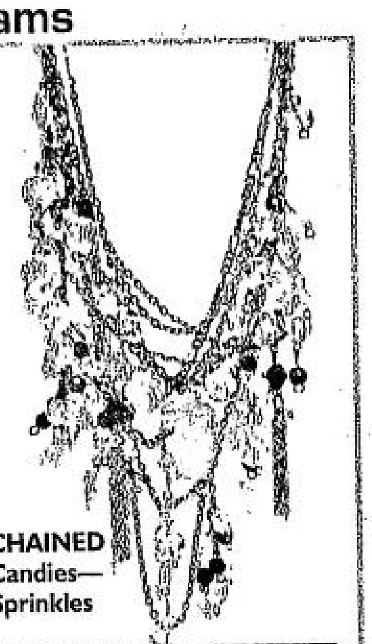
For the accessories lover

Go for sparkling accessories and glittering gems in this season of shimmer

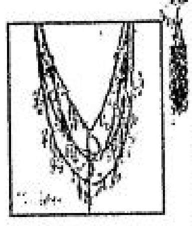
By Pam Pastor

THIS CHRISTMAS, YOUR ACCESSORIES-loving friend deserves only the best. The Fashion Freaks found four young designers who create art for wearing. Nothing mass-produced here—only pieces lovingly handcrafted for your favorite fashion freak.

Wishes and Daydreams

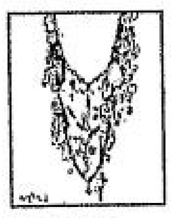


CHAINED Candies—Sprinkles

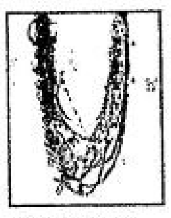


PUNCH

WATERMELON

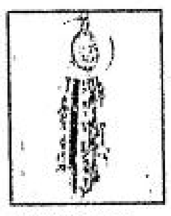


BERRIES



MISH Mash for Lila

SUGAR Rush



SPRINKLE

JEWELRY with yummy-sounding names

Friends Zee, Steph, Mimi, Mitch and Rina make magic with their hands. They create beautiful accessories—the stuff wishes and daydreams are made of. Even the names sound dreamy. They have Chained Candies which they describe as "a clutter of chains, charms and a handful of plastic and acrylic beads." Prices for Chained Candies start at P750. Long necklaces called Medley go for P250, while three-strand ones could be bought for P500. One-of-a-kind charm bracelets cost P350 to P500.

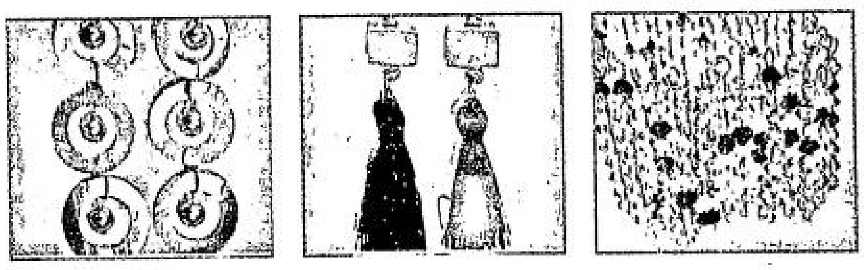
People who love earrings will be pleased to know that Wishes and Daydreams has unique offerings—even pairs with crochet details. There's surely a pair your recipient would fall in love with—Gumdrop earrings (P300); Moonlight Earrings, which the girls describe as "large round bling-blings" (P350); Sprinkle Earrings (P250); and Crystal Dreams and Pink Fantasy, which are crochet-and-chain earrings (P250). If your friend doesn't have pierced ears, no worries. The girls from Wishes and Daydreams make lovely clip-on earrings called Sugar Rush for P275.

The prices for Bon Bons ("big chain necklaces with random beads and trinkets") start at P600, while Milkyway ("five strands of gun-metal chains, a variety of faux pearls and charms"), which can be used as a belt or an ultra chunky bracelet, is sold at P450.

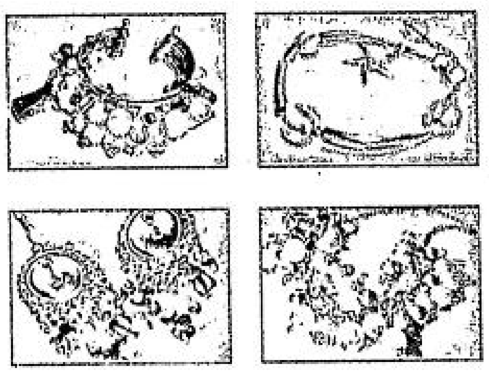
Zee, Steph, Mimi, Mitch and Rina also make customized chunky neckpieces, which they call Mish Mash. Clients can provide their own trinkets and request for the girls to include old jewelry pieces or baubles in their unique creation.

One-of-a-kind pieces are available at I Love You store, 7840 Underground Pilar Place, Makati Ave. (beside Government), open on Tuesdays-Sundays, 2 p.m.-12 midnight. For orders and inquiries, visit www.wishesanddaydreams.tk or www.geocities.com/wishesanddaydreams, and call 0917-9563153/0917-8943785.

Patina



GIFTS that can be worn all year long



Rea Gomez has taken a break from corporate work by making jewelry. Her passion for creating accessories has gotten good feedback from her friends, officemates and relatives, who were her first clients.

Her brand, Patina, has a lot to offer lovers of accessories. Bracelets are sold at P400 to P1,200, necklaces at P500-P1,500 while her earrings go from P200 to P800. "It depends on the size and type of materials," she said.

Rea knows that keeping the balance between affordability and quality is key. "I try to keep the prices low so it's affordable for everyone, but of course I still use good materials."

With several collections already under her belt, she still has no plans of stopping. And why should she? With her various designs that range from pretty and girly to wild and chunky, she has creations that would please people with different tastes and personalities.

Recently, she also discovered that many girls love made-to-order pieces. "I can custom-make pieces for people who have certain outfits that they want to accessorize. Since they're made-to-order, for sure they will fit and fall properly."

Whether you buy a piece from one of Patina's collections or have jewelry custom-made for your loved one, you're giving her a piece of art that she can wear all year long.

For orders and inquiries, e-mail redenvelope@gmail.com or call 0917-8505766.

Kitsch Corner

KITSCH Corner's memory wire bangles allow you to mix and match your favorite colors and styles.

Margaux de los Reyes, who mal coiled/memory wire bangles and seve day bracelets, was a big success at l year's Noel Bazaar.

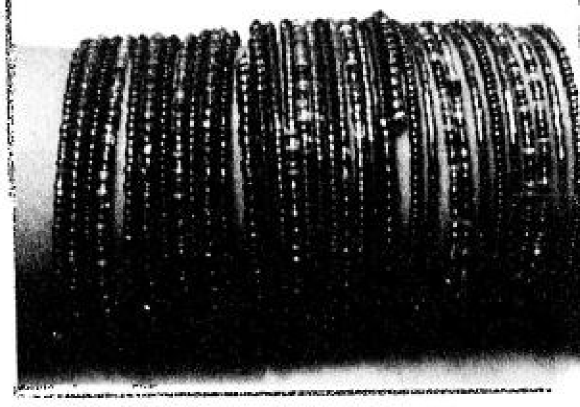
With single bracelets made of coiled wire a glass-seed beads, sold for only P15 each or P100 fo set of seven, Margaux's clients are encouraged to n and match their favorite colors and pieces.

The bracelets add an ethnic-vintage feel to a outfit. Your recipient can pile them on or wear a f at a time depending on her mood.

She also has bangles in pretty colors which sold from P250 to P350. By offering hundreds of signs, Margaux makes sure she has bracelets match any outfit and any personality.

Watch out for more accessories from this creat young designer.

For orders, contact Margaux through 92197 0919-4227845 or e-mail margonautics@yahoo.con



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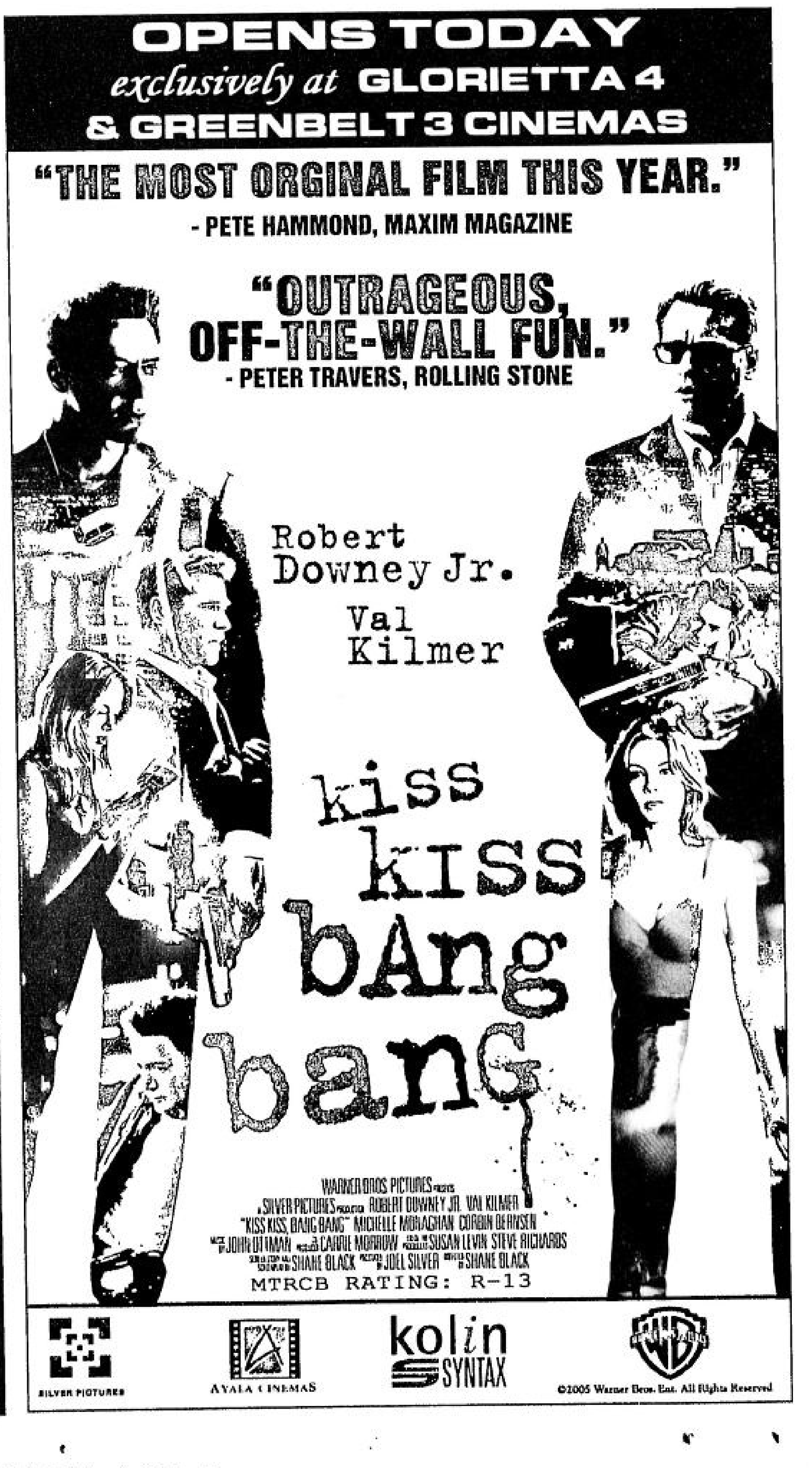

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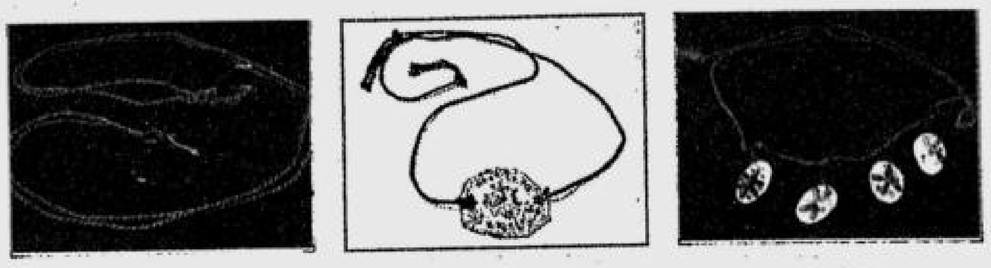
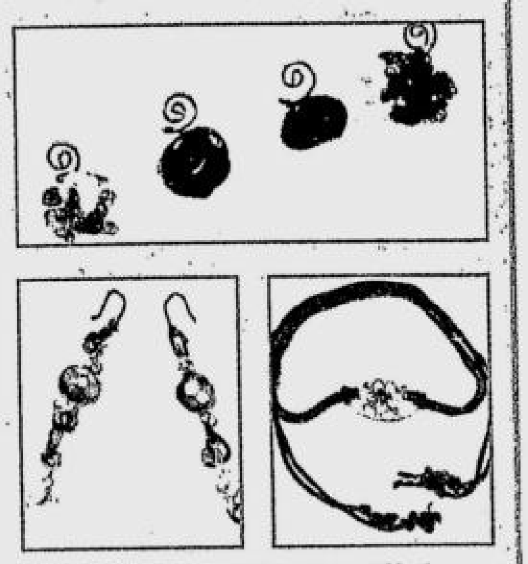
Kathang Kamay





MORE than just art. Ming Ong of Kathang Kamay makes unique jewelry using unusual materials.

Minnette Ong doesn't just make jewelry, she sculpts them. A graphic designer by day, Ming has a burning passion for creating accessories that just cannot be ignored. Known for her copper-wire creations, she first came across her chosen medium while passing by an electric-fan shop in Cubao. "I was enchanted by the material and I looked for a supplier. Seeing that it is such a flexible material, I experimented and used it for jewelry art." Seemingly determined to use unusual materials to create unique accessories, she also recently started using resin to create jewelry and belts.

Ming expresses her gratitude to women who love her work.

"My first clients who appreciated my kind of art include Ruby Gan, the fashionista businesswoman who also loves Hello Kitty, Jenni Epperson, KC Concepcion, Tippi Ocampo, Anne Curtis, Heart Evangelista, Celeste Legaspi and Angel Aquino. I adore Angel, she's truly beautiful inside and out."

But it's not just them. Because students, writers, visual artists and working women have all fallen in love with her work.

Ming has an attachment for each of her creations. "I would like to call them as my 'masterpieces.' I am hoping that my art would make one really proud to wear Pinoy jewelry art. Each piece is truly distinct."

She talked about her bestsellers. "The 'boho' rings, my resin belt holsters which are multifunctional because they can also be worn as a neckpiece, my medallion necklaces which can be worn as belts and art nouveau-inspired earrings complete with swirls and tendril-like vines."

Since she started, she has sold over 10,000 pieces. And Ming remains passionate about her art. In fact, she has a lot of plans, including coming out with a line of accessories for men. "My vision for Kathang Kamay is to foster appreciation of our own jewelry art industry among Filipinos." She also intends to promote appreciation for Filipino art on a global scale—in fact, Kathang Kamay is now being sold in Spain and Europe.

Ming's love for art goes beyond just her own craft. She is currently pursuing her master's degree in Fine Arts in UP and is pushing a proposal to spur the growth and development of the Philippine jewelry industry.

This Christmas, when you fill someone's stocking with pieces from Kathang Kamay, you are more than just giving them accessories. You are giving them a gift of passion, a gift of art.

Kathang Kamay is available at Souk, Ishq, Mag:net (ABS CBN Loop, Paseo Center, Glorietta, and Katipunan), Anna Pashmina, House of Laurel and Chimes Davao. For customized pieces, e-mail minet_ph@yahoo.com.

PHOTOS BY RYAN LIM

CITRUS Green Butterfly

WHITE Trekking Estampas Feminina

ORANGE Flash Way Ethnics

VIOLET and Green High Sun

BLACK Kids Radical

Havaianas alert!

By Pam Pastor

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And since we're sure you know at least one person who's hooked on these Brazilian flip-flops, here's a little taste of what you can buy.

Be overwhelmed with designs and colors that you've never seen before.

If you're not too sure which pairs your Havaianas-hoarding friends already have, we've got even better news. Havaianas gift certificates are now available at All Flip Flops in Glorietta 3.

Happy Havaianas hunting!

Havaianas are available at All Flip Flops, Aura Athletica in Rockwell Power Plant, Rustans U and Chocolate Clothing Co. branches

Caffeine and then some

By Pam Pastor

WHEN STARBUCKS SWITCHES to their red cups, you know Christmas isn't too far away.

Aside from offering special Christmas beverages (Crème Brûlée Latte, Toffee Nut Latte and Peppermint Mocha Latte, Peppermint Mocha Frappuccino and Peppermint Hot Chocolate) and yummy Christmas food items (Gingerbread Loaf, Gingerbread Cookies, Eggnog Rhum Pie and Starbucks Peppermint Brownie—a must-try!), your coffee hangout also becomes a shopping stop for gifts that your caffeine-hooked friends will love.

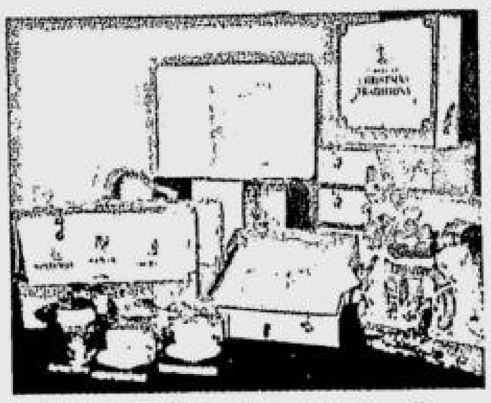
Let your loved one convert his home (or office) into a mini Starbucks by purchasing the Coffee Press Gift Pack. It contains everything you need to make a great cup of coffee—a special edition stainless steel three-cup coffee press, a half-pound bag of ground Starbucks Christmas Blend coffee, a sand timer and a coffee scoop.

You can also go for the Cocoa Trio, three flavors of Starbucks cocoa (chocolate, peppermint and cinnamon) which are packed in a festive tin.

Check out the Starbucks Christmas Traditions Gift Boxes, which are food gift boxes filled with different holiday treats—Chocolate Almond Brittle, German Fruit Honey Cookies, Nut Cracker, Nut Leaves, German Nut Cookies, Choco Cinnamon Star, Swiss Butter Cookies, Christmas Shortbread Cookies and Rhumba Chocolate Chip Cookies.

If your friend is counting calories, you can go for the Bearista Bear or the new Hear Music CD compilation "Sleigh Full of Songs," which includes renditions of popular Christmas carols by artists like Dean Martin and Nat King Cole.

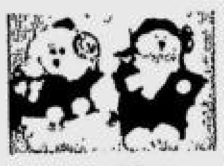
If someone really, really special to you has been drinking coffee like crazy to get their hands on the 2006 Limited Edition Starbucks Coffee Planner, why don't you beat them to it? Buy a Starbucks drink and start filling that promo card with stickers. You still have a few weeks to redeem the planner. And it comes with a bonus: a donation to Project SparkHope, the Starbucks program for early childhood care and development in partnership with Unicef.



HERE are traditional items every coffee lover will love.

FOOD boxes

PEPPERMINT Mocha's our top choice.



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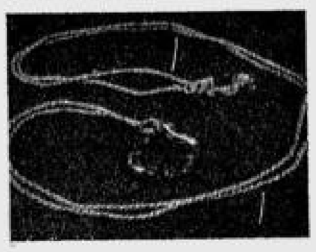

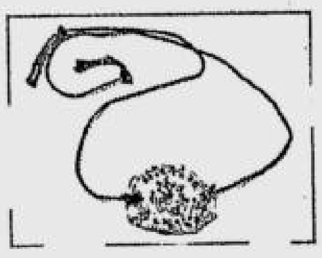

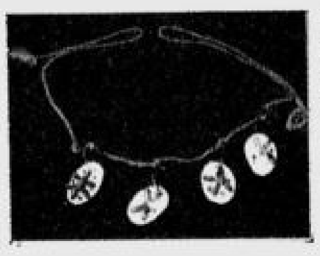

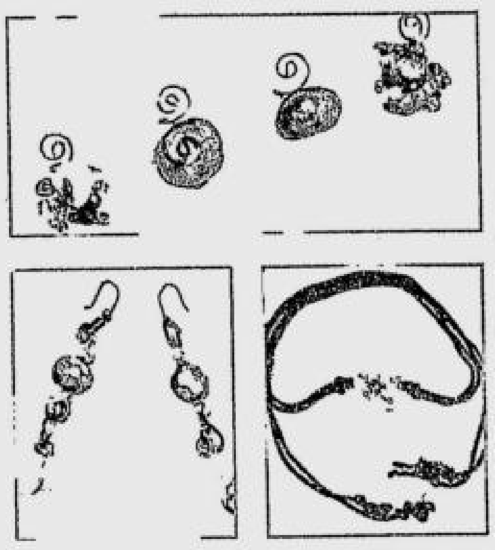

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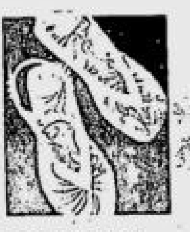
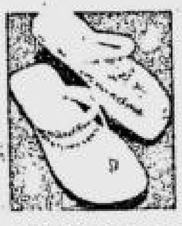
PHOTOS BY RYAN LIM

CITRUS Green Butterfly



WHITE Trekking Estampas Feminina



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And since we're sure you know at least one person who's hooked on these Brazilian flip-flops, here's a little taste of what you can buy.

Be overwhelmed with designs and colors that you've never seen before.

If you're not too sure which pairs your Havaianas-hoarding friends already have, we've got even better news. Havaianas gift certificates are now available at All Flip Flops in Glorietta 3.

Happy Havaianas hunting!

Havaianas are available at All Flip Flops, Aura Athletica in Rockwell Power Plant, Rustans U and Chocolate Clothing Co. branches

Caffeine and then some

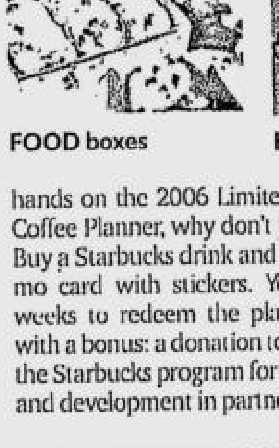
By Pam Pastor

WHEN STARBUCKS SWITCHES to their red cups, you know Christmas isn't too far away.

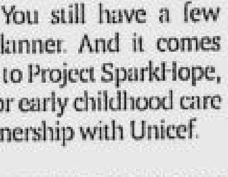
Aside from offering special Christmas beverages (Crème Brûlée Latte, Toffee Nut Latte and Peppermint Mocha Latte, Peppermint Mocha Frappuccino and Peppermint Hot Chocolate) and yummy Christmas food items (Gingerbread Loaf, Gingerbread Cookies, Eggnog Rhum Pie and Starbucks Peppermint Brownie—a must-try!), your coffee hangout also becomes a shopping stop for gifts that your caffeine-hooked friends will love.

HERE are traditional items every coffee lover will love.

PEPPERMINT Mocha's our top choice.



FOOD boxes



BEARISTAS

Let your loved one convert his home (or office) into a mini Starbucks by purchasing the Coffee Press Gift Pack. It contains everything you need to make a great cup of coffee—a special edition stainless steel three-cup coffee press, a half-pound bag of ground Starbucks Christmas Blend coffee, a sand timer and a coffee scoop.

You can also go for the Cocoa Trio, three flavors of Starbucks cocoa (chocolate, peppermint and cinnamon) which are packed in a festive tin.

Check out the Starbucks Christmas Traditions Gift Boxes, which are food gift boxes filled with different holiday treats—Chocolate Almond Brittle, German Fruit Honey Cookies, Nut Cracker, Nut Leaves, German Nut Cookies, Choco Cinnamon Star, Swiss Butter Cookies, Christmas Shortbread Cookies and Rhumba Chocolate Chip Cookies.

If your friend is counting calories, you can go for the Bearista Bear or the new Hear Music CD compilation "Sleigh Full of Songs," which includes renditions of popular Christmas carols by artists like Dean Martin and Nat King Cole.

If someone really, really special to you has been drinking coffee like crazy to get their hands on the 2006 Limited Edition Starbucks Coffee Planner, why don't you beat them to it? Buy a Starbucks drink and start filling that promo card with stickers. You still have a few weeks to redeem the planner. And it comes with a bonus: a donation to Project SparkHope, the Starbucks program for early childhood care and development in partnership with Unicef.

IT'S IN THE BAG!
PARIS PREMIERE DESIGNER OF LEATHER GOODS COMES TO MANILA.
LA BAGAGERIE
(BA-GA-JE-RI)
THE FIRST PHILIPPINE BOUTIQUE OF LA BAGGAGERIE OPENS IN SHANGRILA PLAZA.
Style: Hobo LB (Cotton Canvas & Leather)
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SANGLON (Soft Cowhide)
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HOBO Soft Cowhide
SHOP SL (Micro Fiber
MATELASSE Quilted Leather

BANKING HAS NEVER BEEN THIS REWARDING!
"I opened a savings account with Banco de . My deposit is secure and earns great rewards Iba ang REWARDS dito!"
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World Class Shooting Champion
BDO Rewards program details, contact the B[illegible] at 631-8000, Domestic Toll Free # 1-800-10-631-8000 or [illegible] Banco de Oro Branch near you! Points sys[illegible] the terms and conditions of the BDO Rewards program.
Member PDIC. Maximum deposit insuran[illegible] 50 000 00
Per DTI-NCR Permit # 2070, Series of 2005

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Robinsons Department Store

P229.75
PIERRE CARDIN GIFT SET

P279.75
BURLINGTON GIFT PACK

P169.75
WALKER GIFT PACK

P249.75
FREEGO T-SHIRT GIFT PACK

P999.75
ARNALDO BASSINI GIFT SET

P4,990.00
TIMEX WATCH

ADD ONS

P4,298.00
CONTRADICTION BY CALVIN KLEIN 100ml

P3,450.00
ENERGISE BY HUGO BOSS 125ml

GIFT SETS

P199.75
COMPANY B GIFT PACK (CONTAINS 1 SHIRT ONLY)

P199.75
ARMANDO CARUSO GIFT SET

P119.75
PORTSIDE BOXERS

FOR HIM

Hot Holiday Picks

P199.75
FREEGO T-SHIRT GIFT PACK

P179.75
COMPANY B GIFT PACK

BAGS

P249.75 - P279.75
COSE' CANVAS BAGS

WATCHES

P2,990.00
AXCENT LADIES' WATCH

P3,990.00
ARMITRON LADIES' WATCH

P3,898.00
ISSEY MIYAKE GIFT SET

P299.75
NITELITES GIFT SET

P189.75
ARMANDO CARUSO HANDKERCHIEF SET

GIFT SETS

SCENTS

P3,000.00
RALPH LAUREN COOL GIFT SET

FOR HER

Some items available at selected stores only.

Prices subject to change without prior notice.

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i Drink i Drink i Drink i Drink i Drink i Win!
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Seattle's Best

WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 7, 2005
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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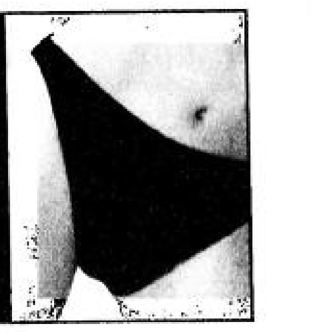
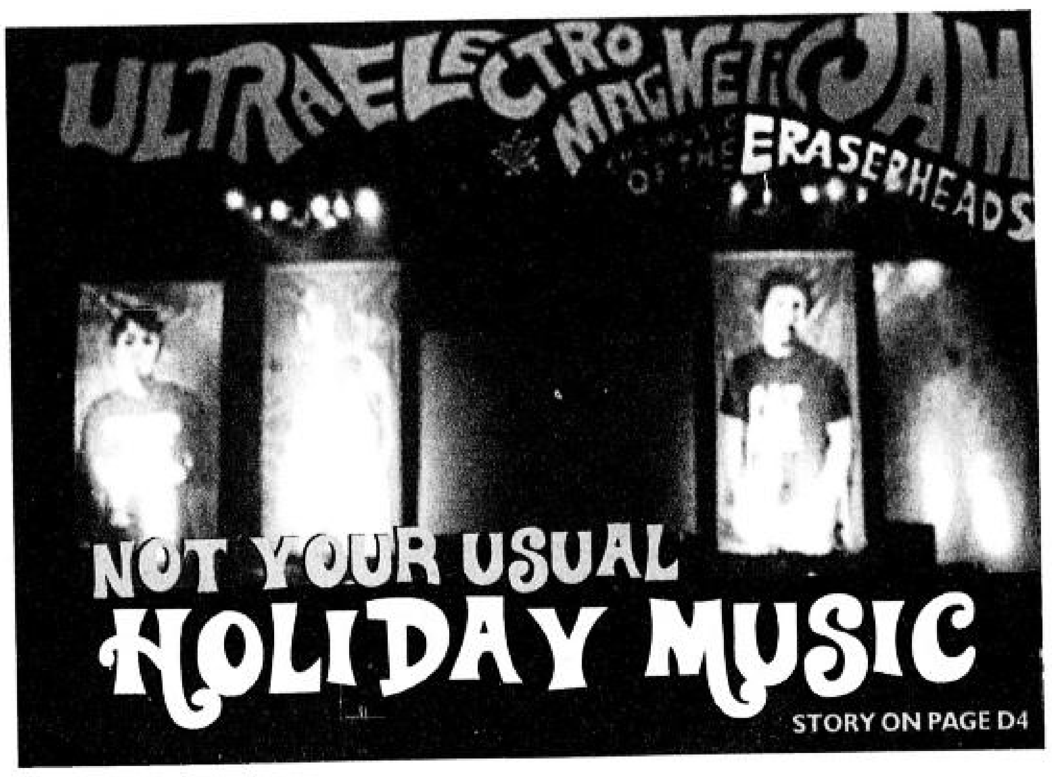
to be you • to be young • to be you! • To be you!


SMOOTH & SEXY.
HAIR-FREE
BIKINI LINES.
Call the Facial Care
Centre for LaserLight
892 SKIN (7546)



NOT YOUR USUAL HOLIDAY MUSIC

STORY ON PAGE D4

TOO early to be vintage, but heck, we badly miss the E-heads. At the "Ultraelectromagneticjam" album launch

Piandré SALON FOR MEN & WOMEN
COLOR YOUR HAIR COLOR YOUR WORLD
DEC 8-15 2005
L'ORÉAL PROFESSIONNEL
WELLA
davines
PER DTI-NCR PERMIT # 0837, SERIES OF 2005
20% OFF
COLOR
CELLOPHANE
HIGHLIGHTS
GREENBELT 816.3884 / 816.4002
SALCEDO 817.8770 / 817.2959
AYALA AVENUE 751.9560 / 751.9561
TIMOG 927.3448 / 411.8728
GREENHILLS 722.6614 / 722.6615
LIBIS 437.7021 / 437.7028
DEL MONTE 413.7183 / 413.7192
SAN JUAN 726.1084 / 727.2196

Science meets Style
a close watch on electronic pollution and the only watch that can make you feel better

In Honor of Nikola Tesla
A Pioneer of Energy Science

The TESLAR® technology was named for Nikola Tesla, who worked with Thomas Edison. Tesla, a brilliant inventor, is the man who gave us alternating current. He is considered the father of scalar, non Hertzian technology, the technology used in the TESLAR® chip.

Electronic Pollution
We live in a world of high technology and sophisticated living. Our modern lifestyles encourage us to move and work faster in an attempt to accomplish more in less time than ever before. As a result of this stressful lifestyle and the pervasive electronic technology that powers it, our life-expectancy increases while our life-long health declines.

With our increased usage and exposure to electronic gadgets, such as computers, mobile phones, and televisions, all emitting health-threatening Extremely Low Frequencies (ELF), our environment becomes increasingly polluted by the electronic frequencies.

Philip Stein® TESLAR®
In the Philip Stein® TESLAR® watch are two specially designed TESLAR® chips. The TESLAR® chips emit a signal of relaxation and calm, which helps reinforce and protect the body's own electromagnetic field against unwelcome interactions with external electronic pollution, allowing the body to maintain more normal balance.

What to Expect
Because every Philip Stein® TESLAR® wearer may have differing levels of sensitivity to electromagnetic fields, each wearer may experience different reactions. In the last 20 years, studies have shown that the TESLAR® watch helps to improve mirgraine, arthritis, depression, insomnia and jet lags.

As a result of the TESLAR® effect, wearers have experienced:
- Deeper, more restful nighttime sleep
- More calm and less tension in normal stressful situations
- Improved concentration and ability to focus at work
- Increased levels of energy
- An over-all improvement in well-being

Health Watch
The Philip Stein® TESLAR® wearers include such notable celebrities as Oprah Winfrey, Madonna, Jack Nicholson, Barbara Walters, Avril Lavigne, etc. The watch is popular amongst sportsmen, as it is proven that it also helps to ease aches, pain and frigidity. Professional athletes and a number of US Athletes training for the Summer 2004 Olympics, including Kenta' Bell, Ty Sevin, and Penny Blackwell. They have claimed that their endurance and overall performance also see significant improvement.

Experience the TESLAR® effect and let yourself feel more relaxed, more rested and less tense. Try it. Wear it. Live it. Feel it.

PHILIP STEIN®
TESLAR®

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ReD TAG EVENT

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- Plus three (3) year or 100,000 km. warranty (whichever comes first)
- 24-hour Roadside Assistance

*Save up to P61k on the Optra LS MT & LS AT

ReD TAG EVENT
Promo Period Dec. 1-31, 2005 Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 6877, Series of 2005

MODEL	RED TAG PRICE	SAVINGS
Optra L AT	P634K	P49K
Optra LS MT	P649K	P61K
Optra LS AT	P694K	P61K

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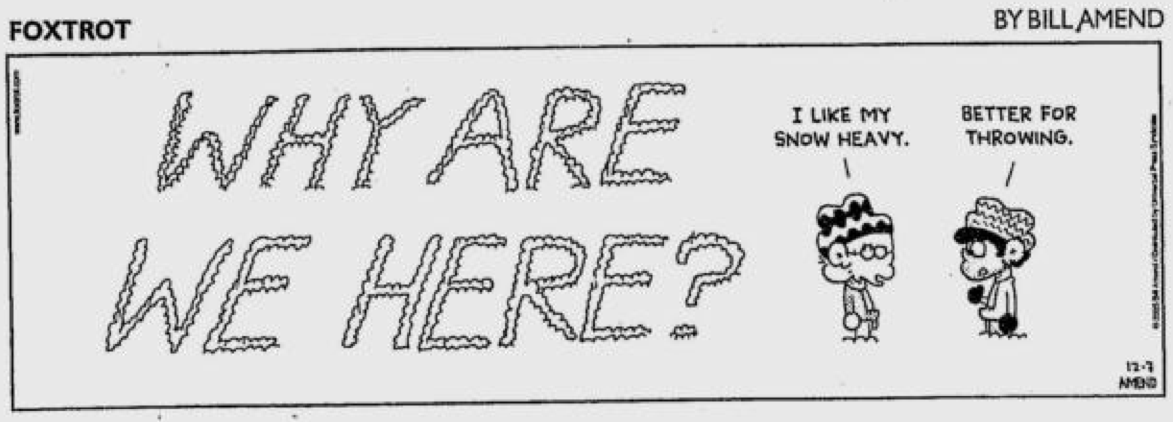
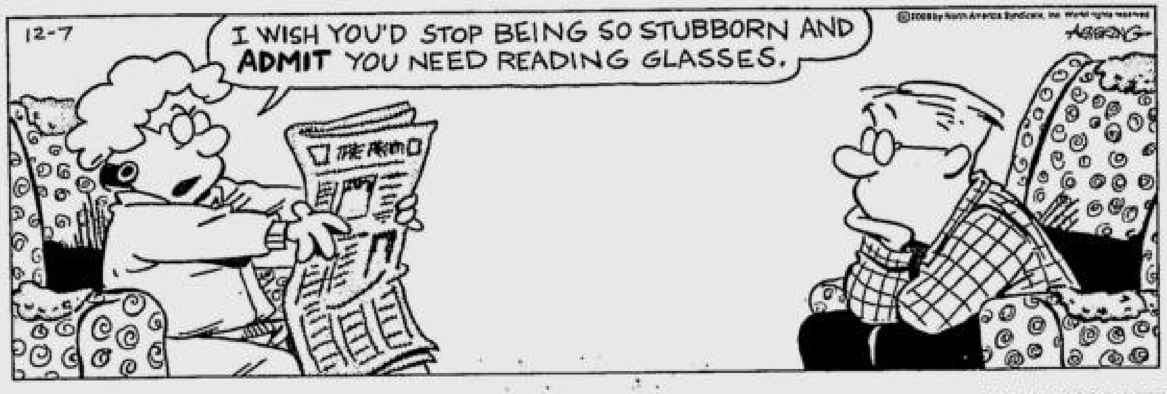
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WHY ARE WE HERE?
I LIKE MY SNOW HEAVY.
BETTER FOR THROWING.
12-7 AMEND

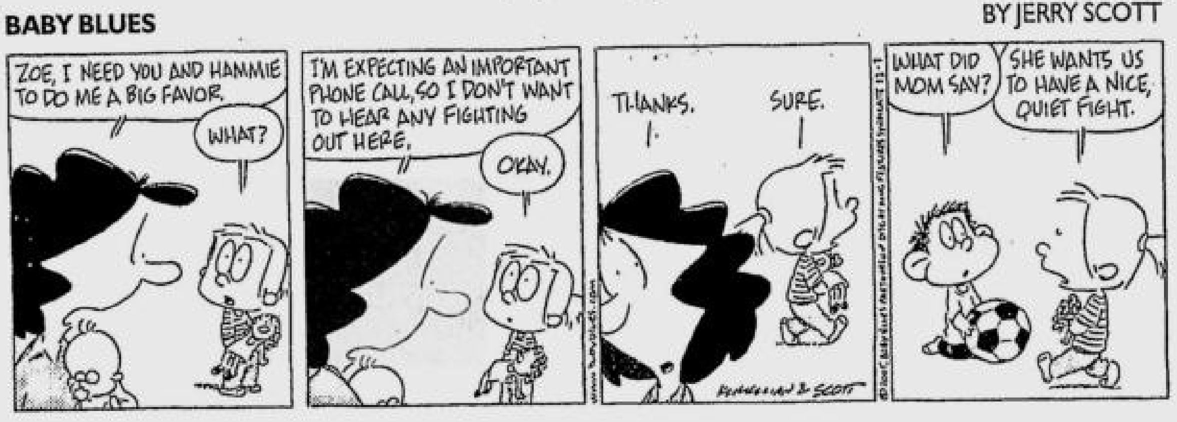
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


12-7
I WISH YOU'D STOP BEING SO STUBBORN AND ADMIT YOU NEED READING GLASSES.
ARMSTRONG

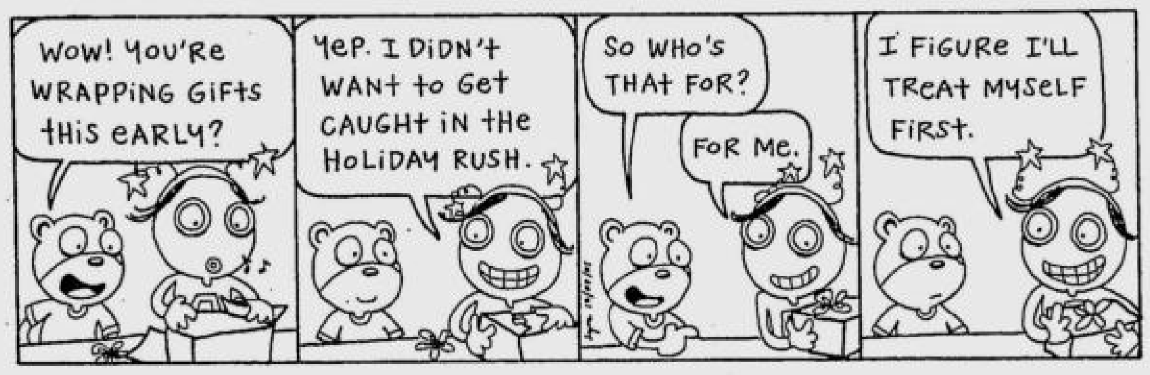
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE, I NEED YOU AND HAMMIE TO DO ME A BIG FAVOR.
WHAT?
I'M EXPECTING AN IMPORTANT PHONE CALL, SO I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANY FIGHTING OUT HERE.
OKAY.
THANKS.
SURE.
WHAT DID MOM SAY?
SHE WANTS US TO HAVE A NICE, QUIET FIGHT.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Wow! You're WRAPPING Gifts this EARLY?
Yep. I DIDN't WANT to Get CAUGHT in the HOLIDAY RUSH.
So WHO's THAT FOR?
FOR Me.
I FIGURE I'LL TREAT MYSELF FIRST.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're individualistic. It might take you a long time to settle on a career path. Your freedom is a survival issue. You're imaginative, sensitive and tuned in to everything around you. Because of this, it's important to hang out with positive people. You believe in your dreams. In the year ahead, you will dismantle some things and move on to something new.

Birthdate of: Pearl Cleage Lomax, poet/playwright; Ellen Burstyn, actress; Tino Martinez, baseball player.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Tomorrow is the Full Moon. That's why you might feel increasing tension building up within you today. Try to avoid arguments about politics, religion, travel or foreign countries.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Anxiety about money and possessions might simply be due to tomorrow's Full Moon. Don't let it get to you. By Friday, things look completely different.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Tomorrow's Full Moon brings added stress to your closest relationships and partnerships. That's because the Full Moon will occur in your sign. Try to be as mellow as you can.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Be patient with co-workers today. Tomorrow's Full Moon will stir things up at work for you. You can already feel this tension building today. Be cool.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Be patient with matters related to vacations, working with children and professional sports. Romantic relationships also need your understanding. Tomorrow's Full Moon stresses these areas.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You feel caught between the demands of your work and the demands of your family. This month you cannot ignore family. It's a simple choice.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a mildly accident-prone day because stress is building due to tomorrow's Full Moon, and this stress affects your communications and transportation. Therefore, go gently.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You have a good head for money. Furthermore, this is a powerful time for you. Don't get hung up on financial matters right now. That's all Full Moon stuff.

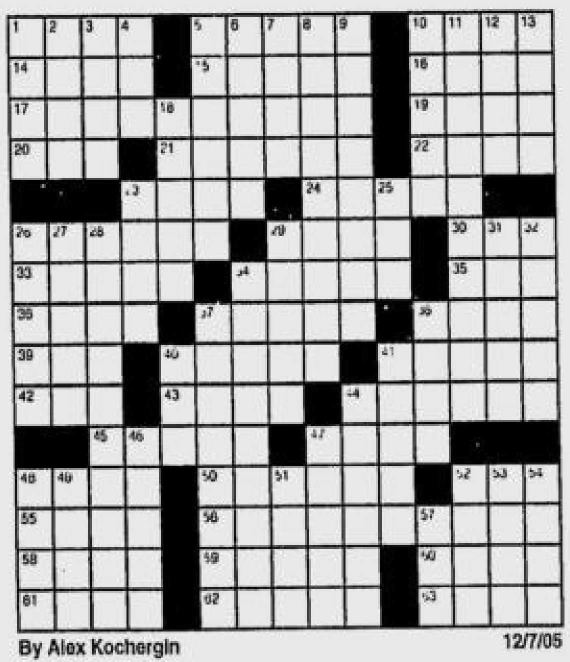
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Tomorrow's Full Moon directly opposes your sign. This definitely brings added stress to your closest relationships and partnerships. The best way to handle this is to listen to others and be patient.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You might be disappointed when dealing with the government or large institutions today. You can't get what you want. By Friday, things will look different.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You value your friendships. Nevertheless, it might be difficult to talk to a friend today. Tomorrow's Full Moon stirs up some agitation here. Wait a few days.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Demands at home make it difficult for you to meet the demands of your job. Don't worry. You will be able to do this. Bosses and VIPs are impressed with you now. Remain confident.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alex Kochergin
Sunnyvale, CA

12/7/05

ACROSS

1 Throw in cards
5 Ancient sin city
10 Irish Rose's lover
14 __ vincit omnia (love conquers all)
15 Century plant
16 Browse the Web
17 Palace near Paris
19 Buzz off!
20 Common conjunction
21 Those on the lam
22 Just manages
23 Paid players
24 Actress Christine
26 Landlord
29 Creche figures
30 Future louse
33 Killer whales
34 Walks in water
35 Wildebeest
36 Thai currency
37 Repairs
38 Herring's kin
39 WWII zone
40 Pine product
41 Bird droppings
42 Male progeny
43 Table scraps
44 Gabled window
45 Succinct
47 Sandwich pocket
48 Make a hole
50 Most likely
52 Table support
55 Numbered musical piece
56 Palace near Madrid
58 Trig ratio
59 Select few
60 Light brown
61 Red coin?
62 Church assembly
63 Fender flaw

DOWN

1 Type of bean
2 Harbinger
3 Master
4 AMA members
5 Admiral or cabin boy
6 Gives the eye to
7 Evans or Earnhardt
8 Burdened too heavily
9 Dispatches
10 Plus feature
11 Palace in London
12 "Dies __"
13 Small newts
18 Bushy hairdos
23 H.S. junior's exam
25 That guy's
26 Places for earrings
27 Muse of poetry
28 Palace in Vienna
29 Very long skirts
31 Mindless
32 Henry VIII's last name
34 In a pensive manner
37 Anticipates
38 Chapter of the Koran
40 King of France
41 Affected
44 Created a phonograph record
46 VCR button
47 Basil sauce
48 Type of pear
49 Mayberry youngster
51 Deer head?
52 Minute parasites
53 Merit
54 Oversupply
57 Rainbow band

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

G	I	F	T	S		A	P	S	E		M	A	I	L
A	B	O	U	T		M	A	U	L		A	R	N	O
S	A	C	R	A	M	E	N	T	O		L	A	D	S
	R	I	N	G	I	N	G	U	P	B	A	B	Y	
			O	E	R			R	E	A	P			
B	R	E	N		R	A	T	E		T	R	O	P	E
A	I	L		A	O	N	E		C	H	O	R	E	S
L	A	S	T	F	R	O	M	T	H	E	P	A	S	T
S	N	A	R	L	S		P	E	A	S		T	O	E
A	T	S	E	A		G	O	E	S		B	E	S	S
			A	M	O	R			S	E	E			
	O	R	D	E	R	I	N	C	I	D	E	N	T	
E	T	U	I		E	M	U	L	S	I	F	I	E	S
E	R	I	N		A	L	D	O		T	U	L	L	E
K	O	N	G		D	Y	E	D		S	P	E	L	T

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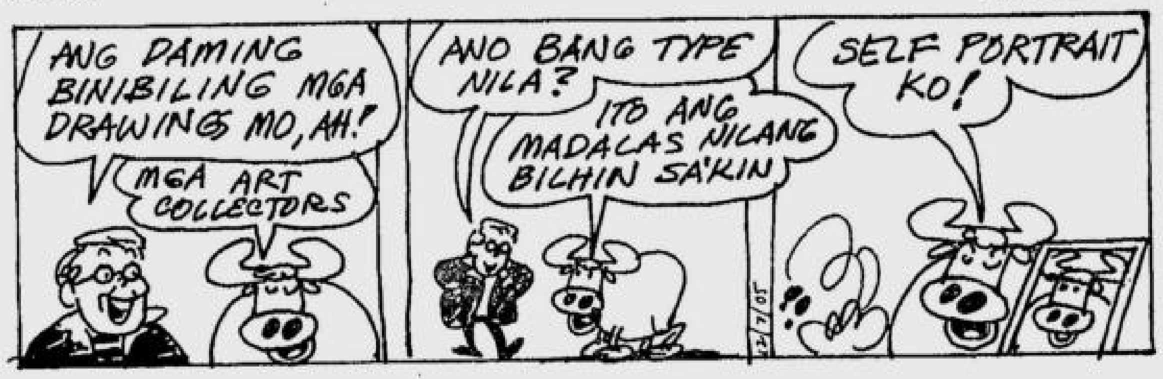
12/7/05

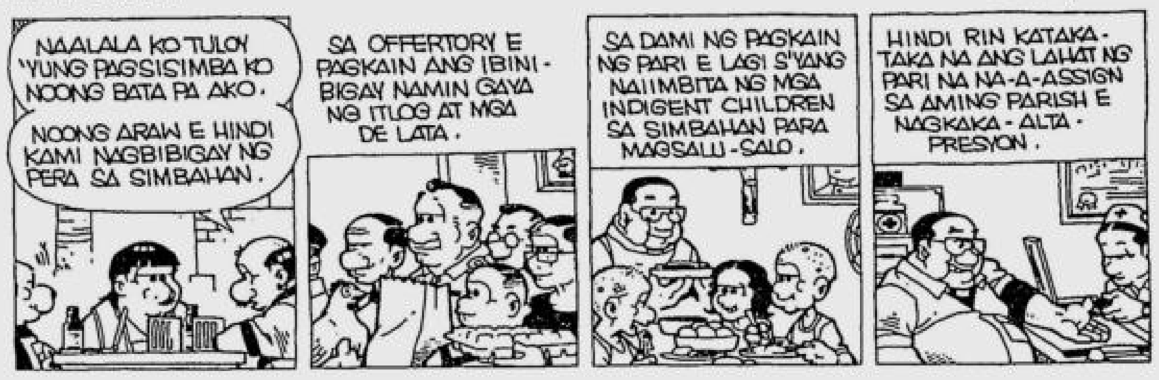
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG DAMING BINIBILING MGA DRAWINGS MO, AH!
MGA ART COLLECTORS
ANO BANG TYPE NILA?
ITO ANG MADALAS NILANG BILHIN SA'KIN
SELF PORTRAIT KO!
12/7/05

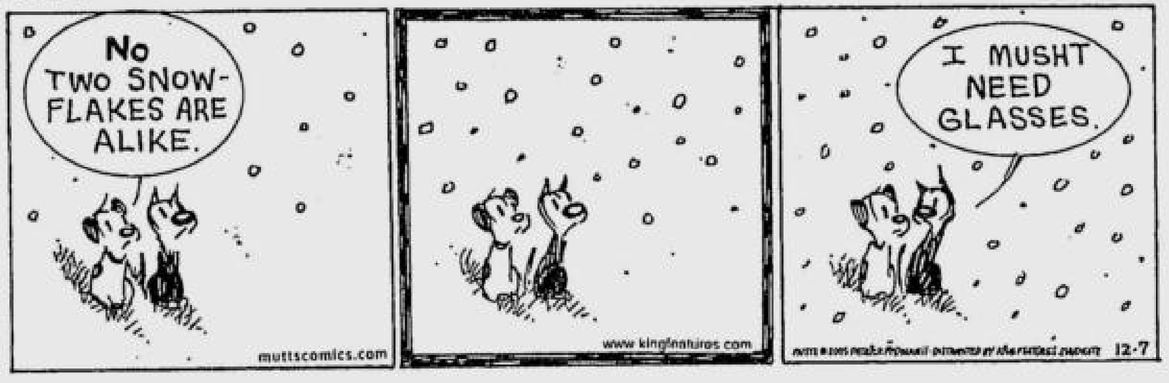
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAALALA KO TULOY 'YUNG PAGSISIMBA KO NOONG BATA PA AKO.
NOONG ARAW E HINDI KAMI NAGBIBIGAY NG PERA SA SIMBAHAN.
SA OFFERTORY E PAGKAIN ANG IBINIBIGAY NAMIN GAYA NG ITLOG AT MGA DE LATA.
SA DAMI NG PAGKAIN NG PARI E LAGI S'YANG NAIIMBITA NG MGA INDIGENT CHILDREN SA SIMBAHAN PARA MAGSALU-SALO.
HINDI RIN KATAKA-TAKA NA ANG LAHAT NG PARI NA NA-A-ASSIGN SA AMING PARISH E NAGKAKA-ALTA-PRESYON.

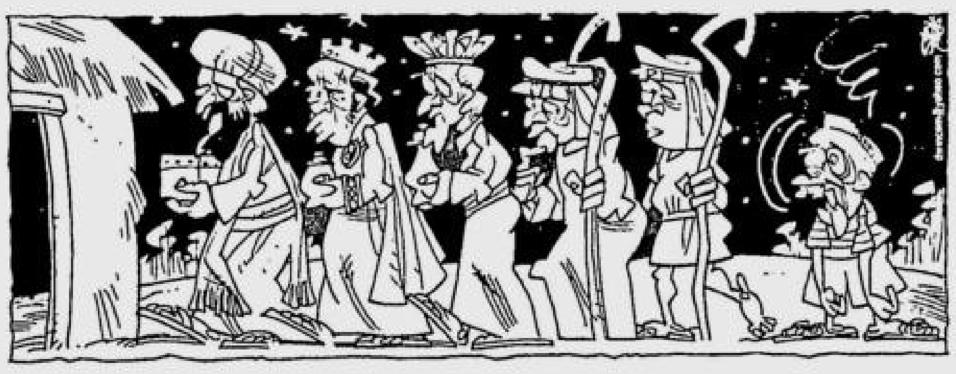
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


No TWO SNOW-FLAKES ARE ALIKE.
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
I MUSHT NEED GLASSES.
12-7

DIVINE COMEDY

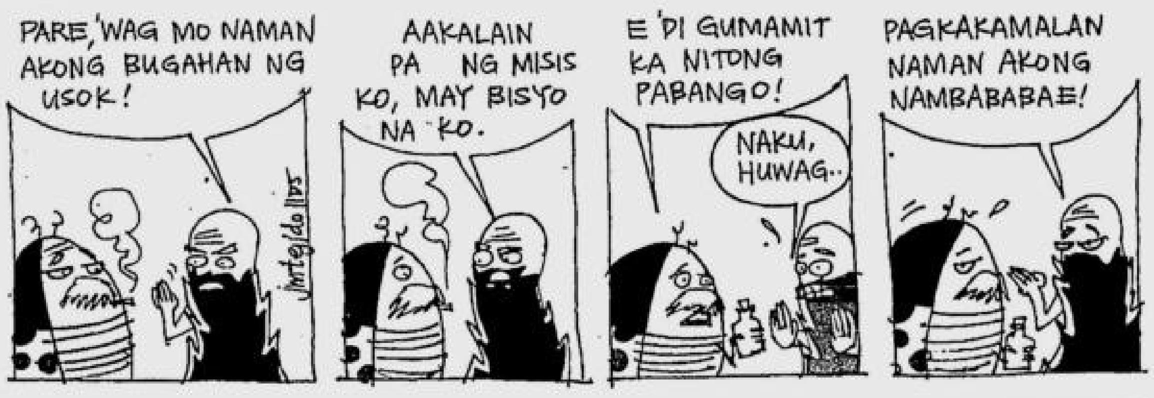
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



THE THREE KINGS, SHEPHERDS AND THE LITTLE DUMBER BOY

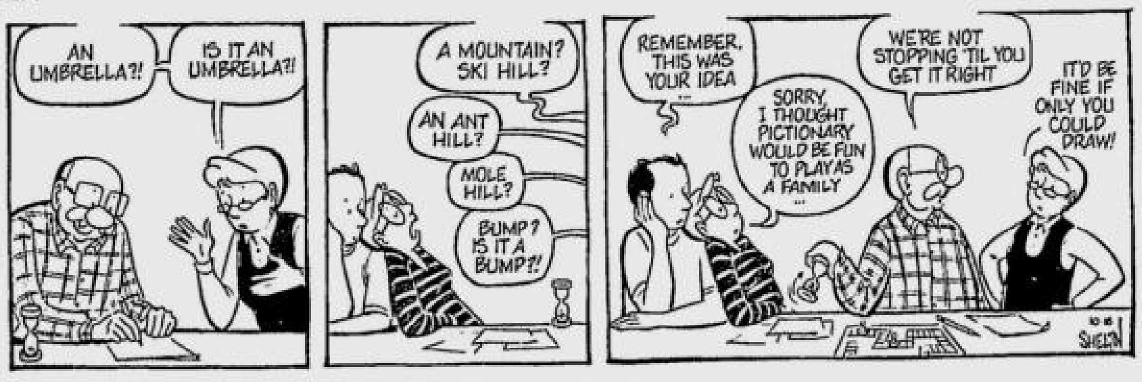
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PARE, 'WAG MO NAMAN AKONG BUGAHAN NG USOK!
AAKALAIN PA NG MISIS KO, MAY BISYO NA KO.
E 'DI GUMAMIT KA NITONG PABANGO!
NAKU, HUWAG..
PAGKAKAMALAN NAMAN AKONG NAMBABABAE!

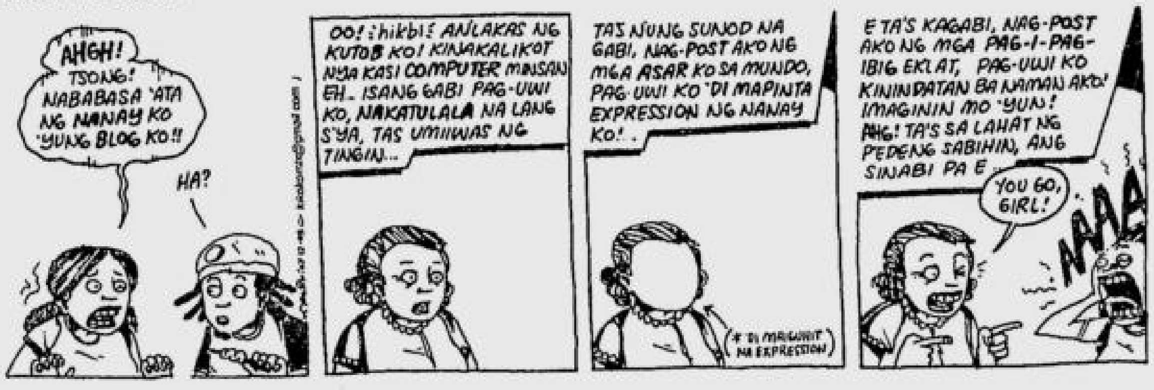
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


AN UMBRELLA?!
IS IT AN UMBRELLA?!
A MOUNTAIN? SKI HILL?
AN ANT HILL?
MOLE HILL?
BUMP? IS IT A BUMP?!
REMEMBER, THIS WAS YOUR IDEA ...
SORRY, I THOUGHT PICTIONARY WOULD BE FUN TO PLAY AS A FAMILY ...
WE'RE NOT STOPPING 'TIL YOU GET IT RIGHT
IT'D BE FINE IF ONLY YOU COULD DRAW!
SHELTON

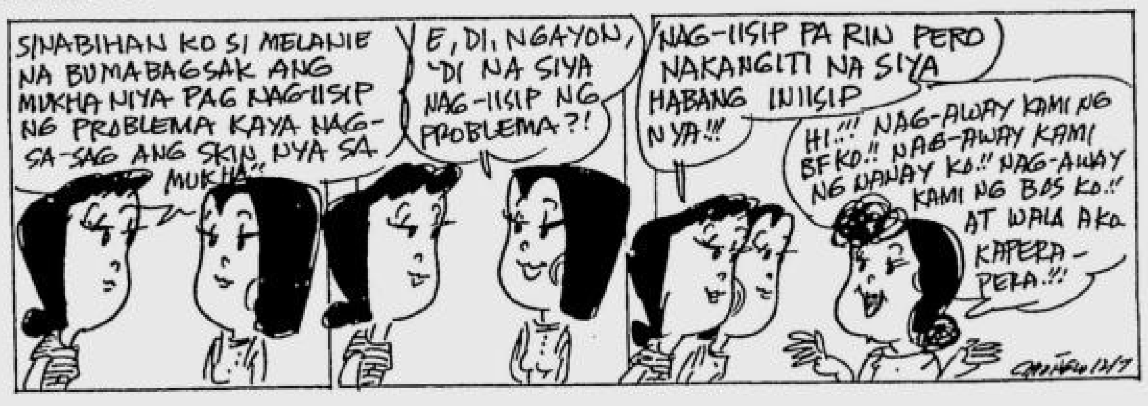
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


AHGH! TSONG! NABABASA 'ATA NG NANAY KO 'YUNG BLOG KO!!
HA?
OO! ;hikbi; ANLAKAS NG KUTOB KO! KINAKALIKOT NYA KASI COMPUTER MINSAN EH.. ISANG GABI PAG-UWI KO, NAKATULALA NA LANG S'YA, TAS UMIIWAS NG TINGIN...
TAS NUNG SUNOD NA GABI, NAG-POST AKO NG MGA ASAR KO SA MUNDO, PAG-UWI KO 'DI MAPINTA EXPRESSION NG NANAY KO!..
(* 'DI MAPINTA NA EXPRESSION)
E TA'S KAGABI, NAG-POST AKO NG MGA PAG-I-PAG-IBIG EKLAT, PAG-UWI KO KININDATAN BA NAMAN AKO! IMAGININ MO 'YUN! ARG! TA'S SA LAHAT NG PEDENG SABIHIN, ANG SINABI PA E
YOU GO, GIRL!
AAA

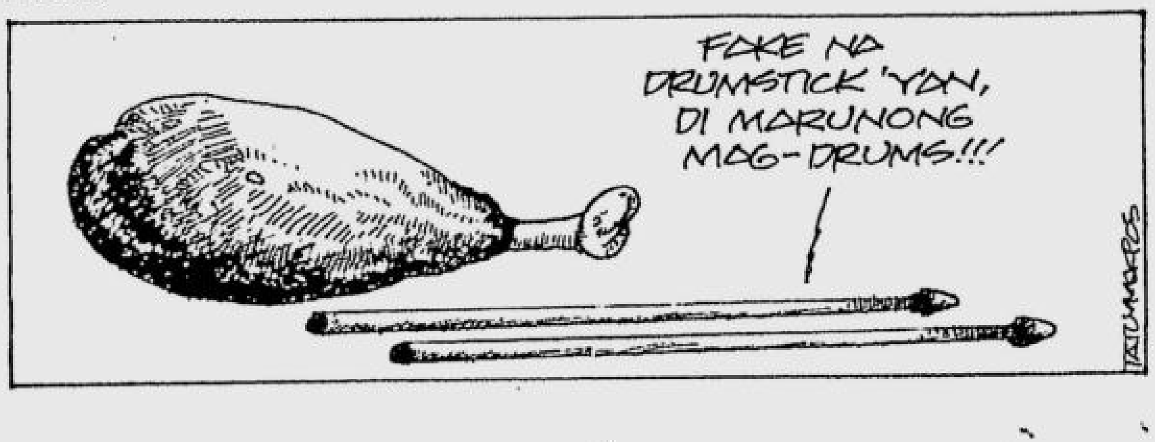
LOVEKNOTS

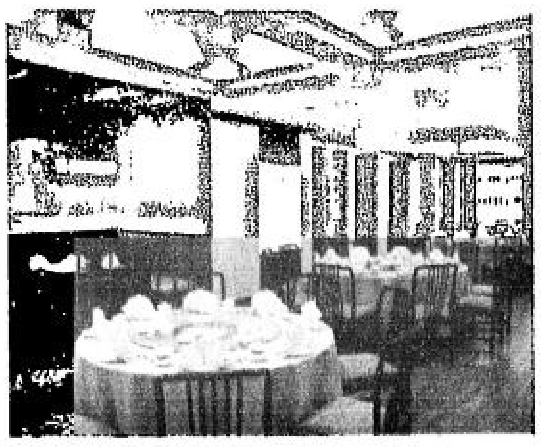
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SINABIHAN KO SI MELANIE NA BUMABAGSAK ANG MUKHA NIYA PAG NAG-IISIP NG PROBLEMA KAYA NAG-SA-SAG ANG SKIN NYA SA MUKHA..
E, DI, NGAYON, 'DI NA SIYA NAG-IISIP NG PROBLEMA?!
NAG-IISIP PA RIN PERO NAKANGITI NA SIYA HABANG INIISIP NYA!!!
HI!!! NAG-AWAY KAMI NG BF KO!! NAG-AWAY KAMI NG NANAY KO!! NAG-AWAY KAMI NG BOS KO!! AT WALA AKO KAPERA-PERA!!!
CHIONGLO 12/7

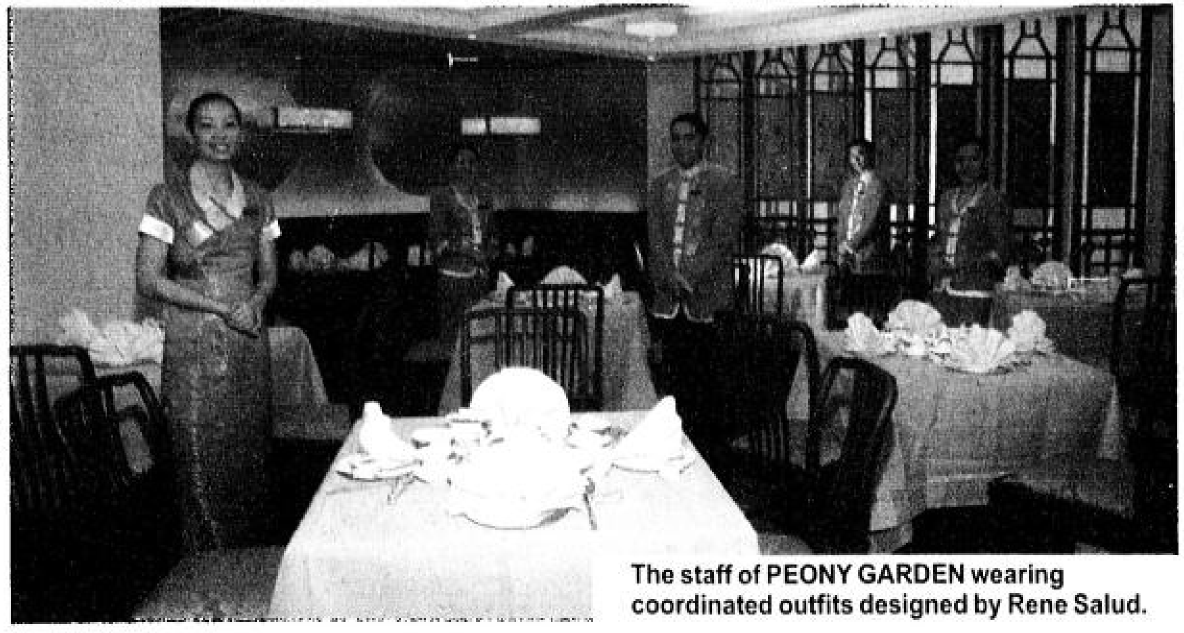
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

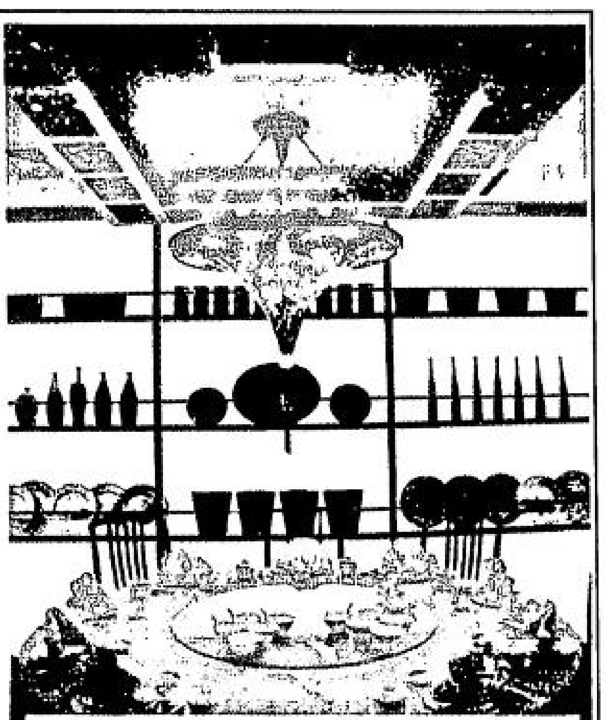

FAKE NA DRUMSTICK 'YAN, DI MARUNONG MAG-DRUMS!!!
TATUMAGROS



PEONY GARDEN, a classy and homey restaurant with red, gold, and earth color schemes, illuminated by soft lights thereby creating a very attractive feel.



The staff of PEONY GARDEN wearing coordinated outfits designed by Rene Salud.



Chinese artifacts are exhibited in each of PEONY GARDEN s three private rooms.

Chinese cuisine reaches delightful heights at Peony Garden

Enjoy scrumptious Cantonese cooking with some Malaysian influence under contemporary setting at Manila Pavillon's new restaurant

EVERYONE'S GOING GAGA OVER CHINESE cooking at the Manila Pavillon with the opening of Peony Garden, the hotel's newest restaurant that offers gustatory traditional Cantonese cooking with a touch of Malaysian influence.

Think of fresh live catch such as tiger prawns, tiger lobsters, and other exotic fish from a big aquarium, cooked and served immediately. Think of enjoying a meal in a very modern Chinese atmosphere with the so called "chill" Chinese music piped in. Think of luck when you see soothing cascading waters or bright lanterns, which is part of the restaurant's fresh interiors.

Everything at Peony Garden may have Chinese elements in it. The term peony refers to Chinese traditional flower symbol. The dishes focus on Southern China's cuisine, which is the popular Cantonese. But there's an added blend, according to Manila Pavillon's resident manager Bernardo Corpus. He says the dishes served here have a touch of Malaysian influence because of chef Lee Yan Feng, who is Malaysian-Chinese.

"What makes Peony Garden distinct is the subtle touch of Malaysian flavor in its menu."

Chef Lee pieced together a comprehensive ala carte and set menus composed of appetizers, soups, main dishes made of vegetables & bean curd, seafood, beef & pork, as well as rice & noodles, and desserts.

Staying true to the Cantonese philosophy of cooking, Chef Lee uses the freshest ingredients while bringing out, rather than drowning out, their flavors. With his Malaysian influence, he uses spices slightly more flavorful than what is usual in Cantonese cooking.

Corpus says another come-on for customers of Peony Garden is the large aquarium located at the restaurant's entrance. It comprises of six tanks, where different kinds of seafood abound for the picking.

"This perhaps, is the best proof in freshness of Peony Garden's dishes. From this tank, customers can request their choice of seafood for immediate preparation," says Corpus.

, Serving authentic Cantonese dishes, Peony Garden offers extensive 'selections of uniquely Cantonese slow-cooked soup preparations. There's even a separate section on premium ingredients such as abalone, shark's fin and bird's nest.

Peony Garden's signature dishes according to Chef Lee are the mouth-watering homemade beancurd, honey spareribs, and sautéed cuttle fish with black pepper sauce.

Just as intricate as its cuisine, so is the authentic Chinese art and décor present at Peony Garden. The interiors are as impressive as the menu. The backlit name and logo stand out on a background of bronze. Surrounding the main doors are slabs of wood with carvings depicting Chinese artifacts.

A partition showing designs of Chinese artifacts at the entrance welcomes guests. A full view of the restaurant reveals a dining place that is classy and homey at the same time. The interior's dominant colors red, gold and earth tones and illumination by soft lights give a very cozy feel to diners.

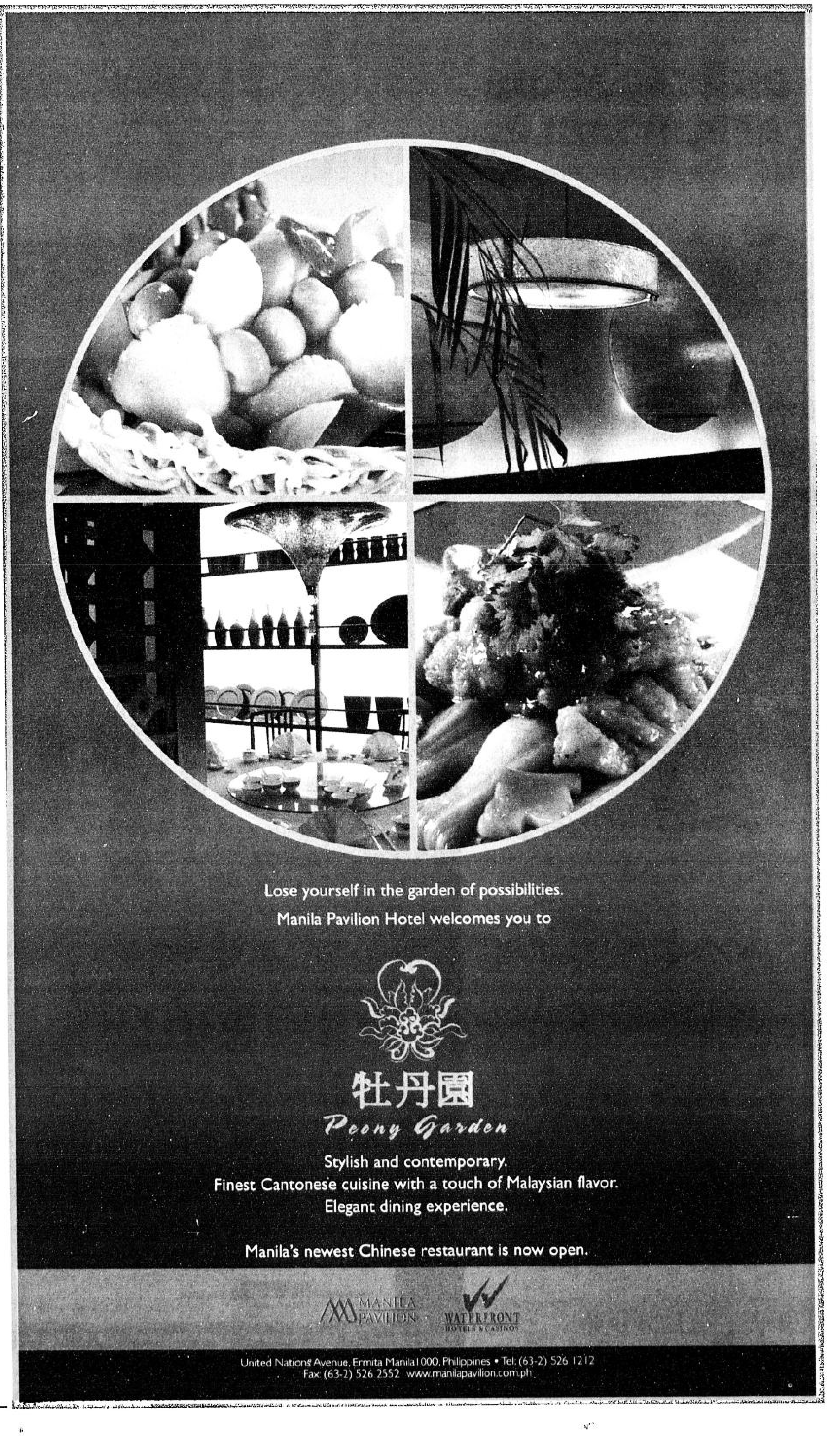
There are three private function rooms--Sunflower, Lotus and Peach--with the Sunflower being the most spacious. Each of these rooms' walls serves as exhibit areas for Chinese artifacts like vases and pots. The function rooms are bounded by operable walls which can be closed or left open depending on guests' preference.

A waterfalls or cascade flows at the rightmost wall to signify a prosperous future for the restaurant. Beside the waterfalls are nine glass panels etched with Chinese designs, each depicting a different scene.

The Peony Garden is open daily during lunch from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m. and dinner from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. For inquiries, please call Manila Pavilion Hotel at 526-1212 extension 2503.

Manila Pavilion Hotel is now part of Waterfront Philippines, Inc., the largest Filipino hotel chain in the country. It is located along United Nations Avenue corner Maria Orosa street, Ermita, Manila.

ADVT.



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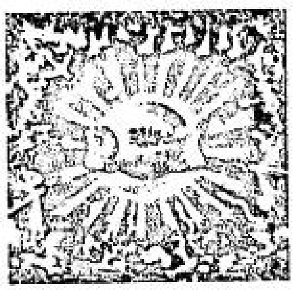
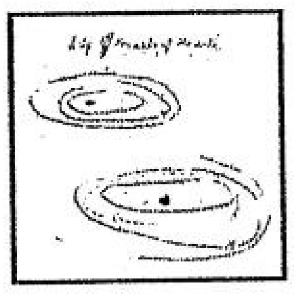
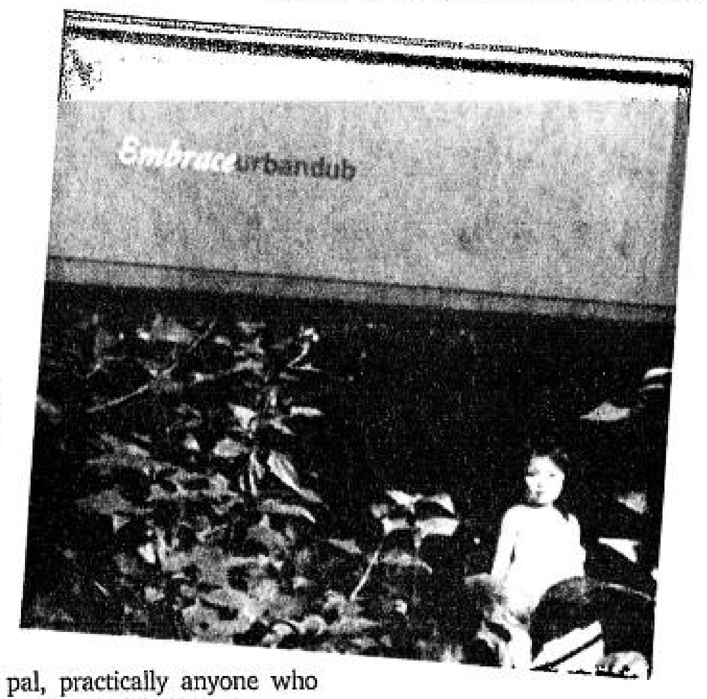
Here's a rundown of CDs you can give your loved ones this Christmas





COMET'S TAIL

NOT YOUR USUAL HOLIDAY MUSIC



By Irene C. Perez

TOP THREE REASONS why you should give CDs by local artists this Christmas:

One, it saves you time. It is way easier to buy a CD than pick a shirt (round-neck or collared? Checkered or striped? Plain? Cotton? Jersey?), a pair of shoes or earrings. Not to mention wrapping it is a breeze.

Two, you'll be able to support local artists—by buying the original ones, of course. These dudes are trying to make something out of the local music scene, and we listeners deserve more than another overplayed, custom made-to-sell hit. We need more musical education other than Love Radio.

And last, it's just too late fo save up for an iPod U2 for Christmas. These CDs will do for now.

Here's a rundown of albums you could give your loved ones this Christmas. And oh, don't be scared to experiment. There is no such thing as too loud or too hardcore. You mom might just be singing Bamboo in the shower, for all you know.

"Ultraelectromagneticjam"

Various artists, Sony Music

Who didn't love the Eraserheads? Who didn't fantasize about being an E-heads groupie? This album, a project of radio station Jam 88.3, contains covers of 17 E-heads songs. There's a reggae version of "Maling Akala" by Brownman Revival, a funkified "Superproxy" by Francis M. and a jazz-infused "Alkohol" by Radioactive Sago Project. Kitchie Nadal, Sponge Cola and Rico J. Puno (he did "Ang Huling El Bimbo") also jam in this album. Trust us, any '90s kid would love this album.

Give 'em to: Your brother or sister who once wore an E-heads shirt but won't admit it.

"POT Remastered"

POT, EMI Phil.

Who can forget the heavily tattooed, shirtless Karl Roy singing "Yugyugan Na" in the late '90s? The band fused funk, soul and jazz, and provided more spunk to the alternative music scene. Some years later, these dudes tweaked and tinkered with the songs from their one and only album and came up with the remastered collection. Classics like "Piece of This," "FYB," "Fishcake" and "Panaginip" are given twists by jamming musicians from other bands, like an old recipe with a new dressing. The new track "It Don't Matter" sure deserves a space on your mp3 player.

"POT Remastered" brings you good ol' rock-and-roll nostalgia. If you were not a fan before, this album would make a convert out of you.

Give 'em to: Your dad, your yuppie sister who once fancied Karl Roy, a younger brother who didn't know the band.

"Embrace"

Urbandub, EMI Phil

This Cebu-based rock band signed up under a major label for "Embrace" after independently releasing two earlier albums—"Influence" and "Rebirth," which won Album of the Year in the 2004 NU Rock Awards.

Now, before anyone screams "sellout," take time to listen to this album. Frontman Gabby Alipe penned most of the songs which are, this time, more emotional than the band's earlier pieces. Fave tracks are "Alert the Armory," "When Heroes Die," "Reveal the Remedy" and "First of Summer." Give this album as a gift and see why Urbandub has been called "that great band from Cebu."

Give 'em to: Your boyfriend, best pal, practically anyone who appreciates good rock music

"Comet's Tail"

Cynthia Alexander

Singer-songwriter-guitarist Cynthia Alexander's music brings you where it is dreamy, dazzling, even magical. Highly influenced by Indian religion, beliefs and music, her songs have that Bollywood feel to it, with distinct percussions and guitar riffs. "Comet's Tail" is Cynthia's third baby, released roughly five years after her "Rippingyarns" album. Check out carrier single "Comet's Tail," "Turquoise Blue" and "Heya." Cynthia's lyrics may not necessarily be poetry, but they sure are lush.

Give 'em to: Your mom, your fave prof or boss, your best friend. Anyone who's into world music, Zen and Oriental stuff.

"Far Side of the World"

Drip, Terno Recordings

After a five-track EP, Drip finally released its full-length album, "Far Side of the World," one of the best trip-hop albums released by a Pinoy group.

Trip what? First off, trip-hop is a music sub-genre that merges hip-hop beats and electronica. If hip-hop is for dancing and electronica is for clubbing, trip-hop is, more often, a sensual union that makes you want to lounge or make out. Get enchanted by the sultry singing of vocalist Beng Calma, while world mixing champion Ian Magbanua and programmer Malek Lopez takes care of the rhythms.

Give 'em to: Your lover or crush who's not really into "noisy music." To the person you want to share a couch with.

"Noontime show"

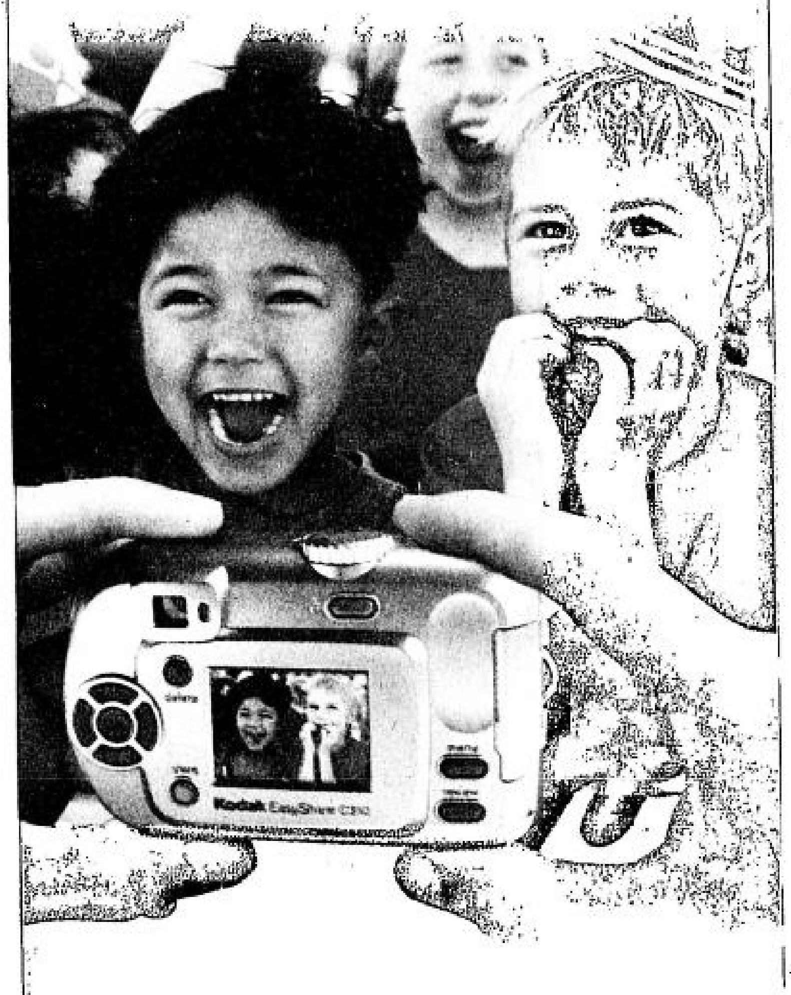
Itchyworms, Universal Records

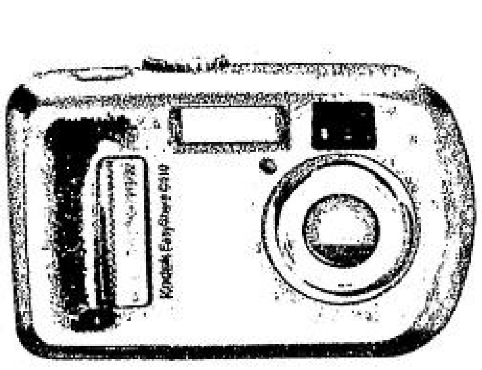
If you want to be perky, as in "Sesame Street"-happy, pop in Itchyworms' latest CD, kick off your shoes and bounce all over your room. This four-man caboodle has that effect. It makes you giddy.

"Noontime show" plays up on the usual Pinoy humor, with song titles like "Patnubay ng Magulang," "Contestant Number One" and "Wala Nang Puwedeng Magmahal Sa 'Yo (Stalker Song)." "Noontime Show" is a happy pill in CD form. Take it whenever you need a fix.

Give 'em to: The funniest or gloomiest person you know. It's an upper that works wonders.

DIGITAL MADE AFFORDABLE.





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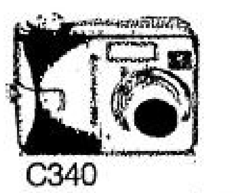

C340
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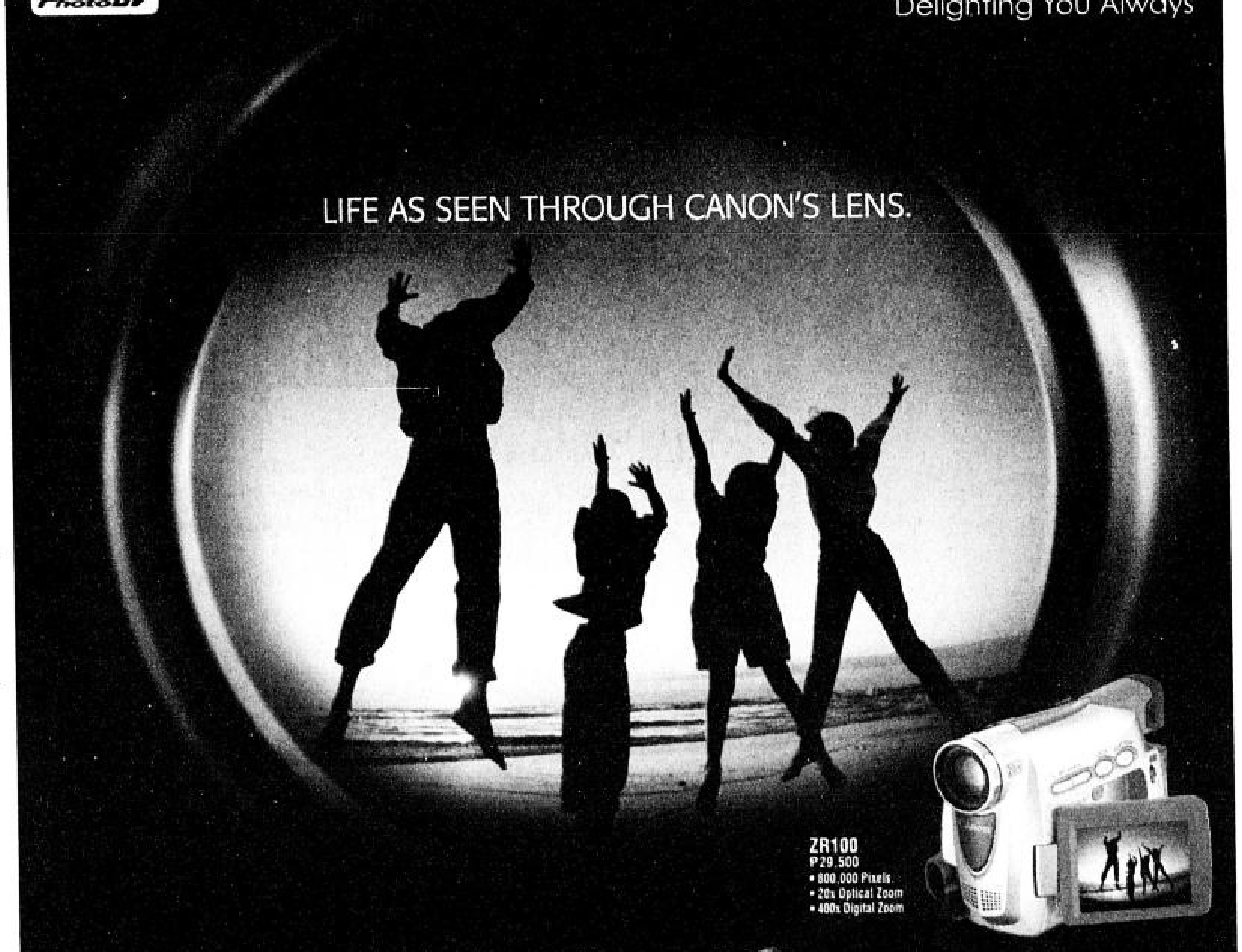

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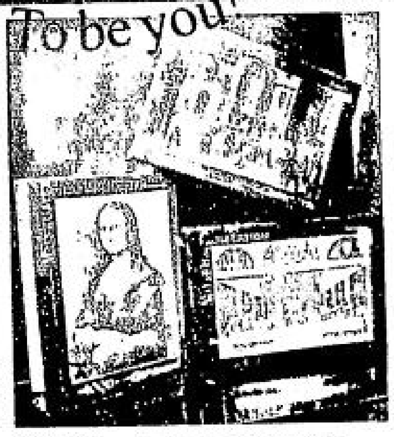
WARNING: This game is addicting. SceneIt is a fun DVD game that tests your movie and TV knowledge.



HERE'S a challenge for puzzle-lovers—put together these 1,000-piece puzzles and be rewarded with a masterpiece.

Guess Who?
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EXERCISE your observation, memory and communication skills with this fun game.

This Christmas, give the gift of good old-fashioned fun

Toys for the big boys—and girls

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Roger Carpio

IN THIS AGE WHEN A LOT OF people spend more time with their computers than with other people, when entertainment comes in the form of kilobytes and megabytes and board games have been replaced with motherboards, it's a treat to go back to good old-fashioned fun.

Hobbes and Landes know all about good old-fashioned fun. Since they first opened in 2002, they have established their stores as a one-stop shop for board games, puzzles and wholesome, relationship-building fun.

Their stores are divided into different pavilions, each one offering a unique line of products. There's Boardwalk (board games), Exploratorium (science toys), Collectibles, Handworks, True Colors (inspirational products), Aquatopia (unusual and beautiful aquariums), King and Country (miniature collectibles), Under Construction (puzzles) and Novelties (beanie babies, brain benders).

People with a creative streak or who want to relax can also try Color Me Mine, a service that allows them to choose ceramics, paint them and bring them home after they are glazed.

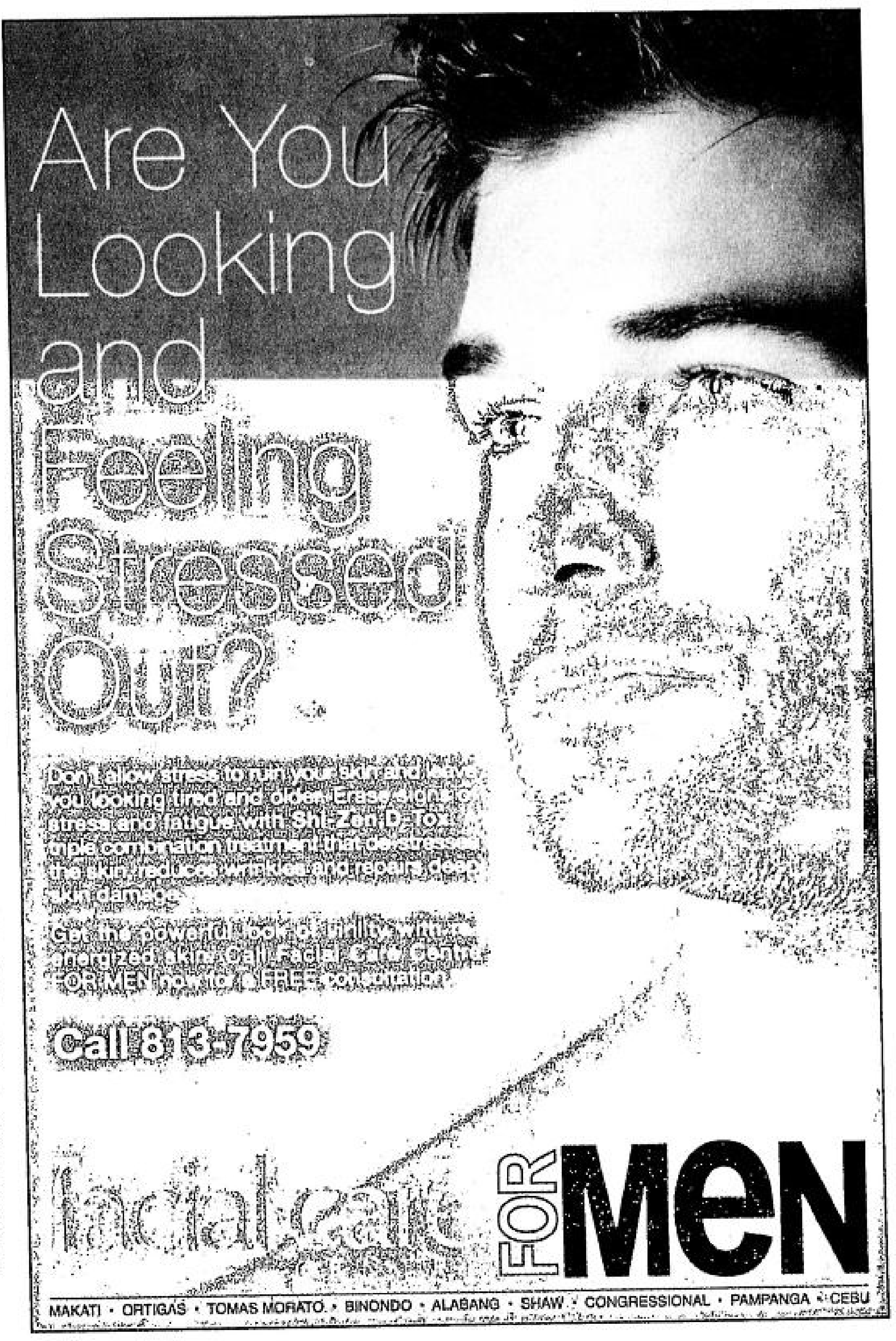
Hobbes and Landes stores offer a relaxing atmosphere and even allow people to play with the puzzles and games inside the store. "It's really touching to see a whole family playing Scrabble in our store. We let people try the games inside the store in hopes that they would like it," said Eric

TOYS/E3

THANKS to Celebrity Poker, poker is hot again!

Axis & Allies
Axis & Allies D-DAY
Risk

WAR games, strategy games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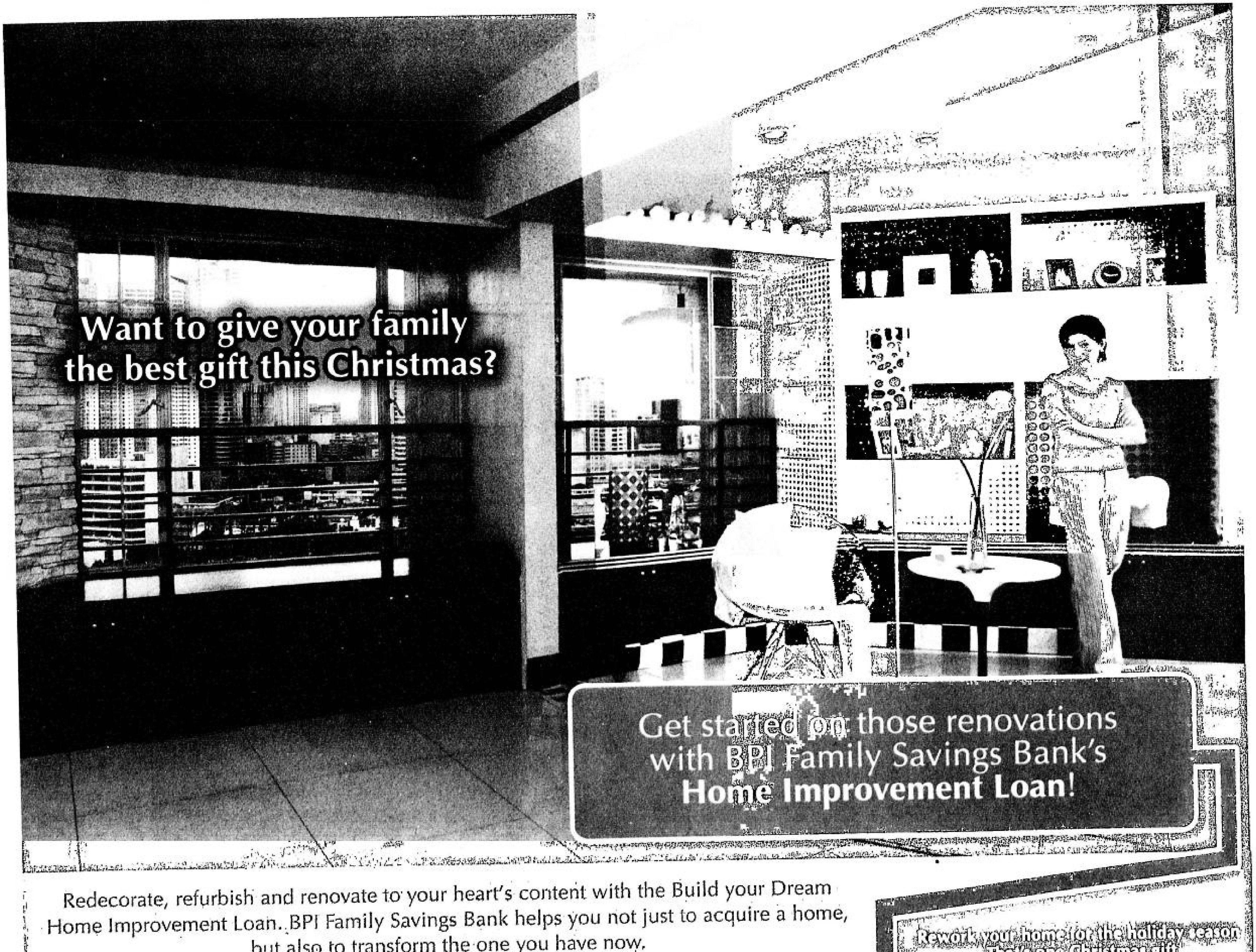
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The 'kikay' wish list

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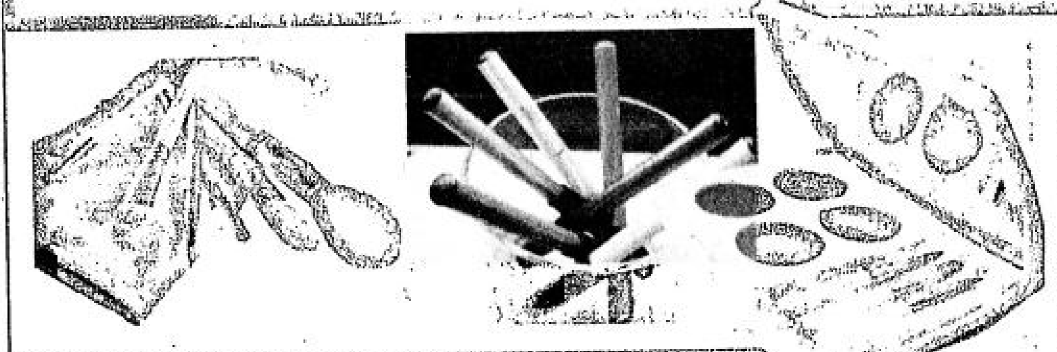
green tea with mint
L'OCCITANE



Text and photos
by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS definitely the best time for *kikay* girls to go shopping—all of a sudden, cosmetic companies come out with gorgeous makeup collections, perfumes are packaged in value-for-money sets, and more often than not, holiday offerings are adorned with glitter and ribbons (which saves clumsy gift-wrappers a lot of time and effort).

Now 2bU! hunted down some of the season's best gifts for your cosmetic-loving sister/girlfriend/cousin/friend. Check out other beauty treasures at Rustan's, Beauty Bar and other department stores.

Awake, Lancôme, Bobbi Brown, Thierry Mugler, Escada, and Decleor are available at Rustan's Makati and Shangri-La. Clean and L'Occitane are available at Rustan's Essenses. Smashbox, Bloom, Philosophy and Jaqua Girls are available at Beauty Bar branches nationwide. Shiseido is found at leading department stores nationwide.

Playful palettes

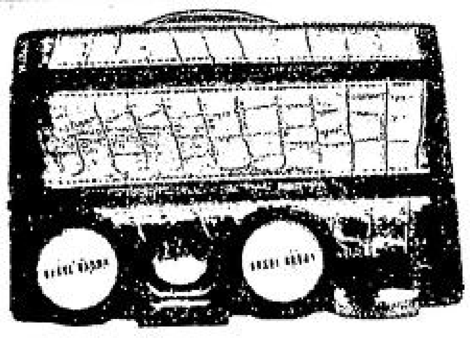
Palettes are a staple in any makeup kit because of their portability and convenience—some have several shades of eye shadow, while some combine eye color, blush and lipstick for a complete look.

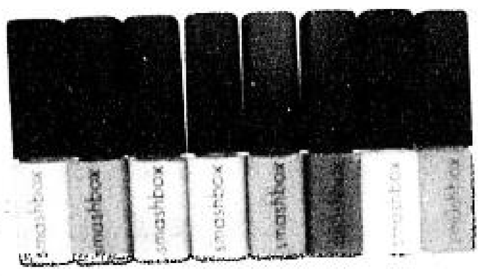
Awake Jewel Dazzle Eye Color palette contains four shimmery eye colors which can go from natural to dramatic.

Bloom eye shadow trio palette in Goddess Green is a goof-proof palette perfect for high-school girls experimenting with makeup for the first time. P1,250 at Beauty Bar.

Lancôme's Juicy Rouge palette has four fruit-colored sheer glosses which can be mixed and matched for more options.

Makeup sets





Bloom's Micro Mini lip gloss set, P1,500 at Beauty Bar, contains 10 of Bloom's most popular shades packaged in tiny tubes. If you know someone who loves makeup but never manages to finish a full tube, this is the gift to get her.

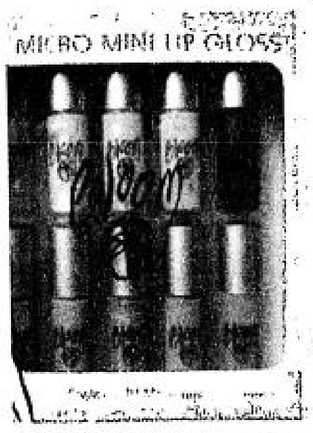
Bloom Lip and Cheek Trio, P1,350 at Beauty Bar, has three double-ended wands; one side contains cream blush, while the other has lip gloss in a matching shade.

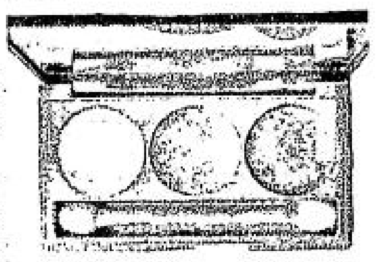
Bloom's Lip Gloss Pack is a steal at P1,250 for four wearable shades. Available at Beauty Bar

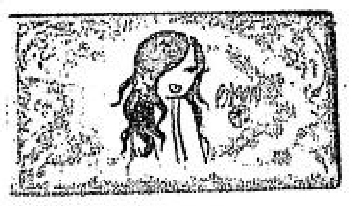
Bobbi Brown's Chocolate Shimmer Kit, P7,500 at Rustan's, contains a neutral shades of eye shadow and blush, a matte lip stain, and a pot of gel eyeliner in a faux crocodile makeup kit. The roomy kit has compartments for more makeup and brushes.

The Smashbox lip gloss set in Layout, P2,500, contains eight mini glosses in every color you need.

bloom
LIP & CHEEK TRIO







Bath and body

Philosophy's The Muffin Man set, P2,250 at Beauty Bar, contains a shimmery body lotion, lip balm and body wash which smell like lemon squares. Even guys love the scent!

Philosophy's Candy Cane Body Wash , P1,250, smells exactly like peppermint candy canes.

The Jaqua Girls Fresh Bared spa kit contains a delicious-smelling body cream, scrub and enzyme mask, P2,250 at Beauty Bar

Philosophy's The Ice Cream man set contains bath and body products that smell like bubble gum—the lunch box it comes in is a plus! P2,250 at Beauty Bar

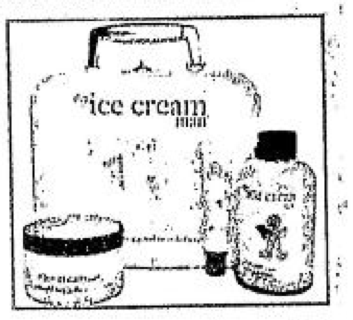
Smashbox's The Roxy brush set looks too pretty to use, but when you get over gawking at it, you'll find that the all-natural goat hairs make for flawless makeup application. P5,000 at Beauty Bar

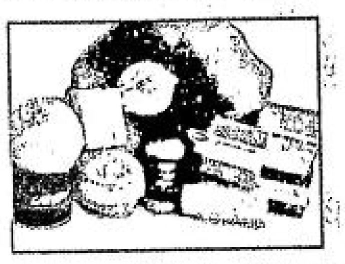
Lush's Snow Fairy set contains a Creamy Candy Bubble Bar slice, Snow Fairy sparkling shower gel, and Angel's Delight soap.

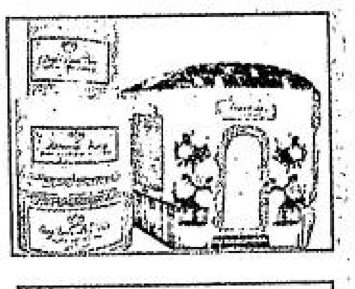
Party girls will love the Lush "You shall go to the ball" set, which contains a tub of Fair Trade foot lotion, a Christmas Party bath bomb, a Shimmy Shimmy massage bar, Ruby Slippers bubble bar, Ultimate Shine shampoo bar, Snow Fairy shower gel and a Party On temple balm.

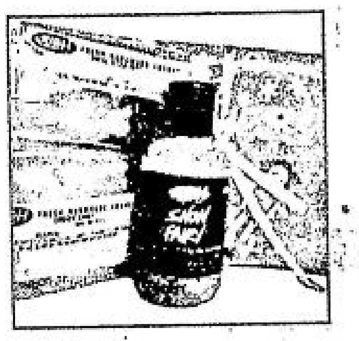
Here's the ultimate bath set—the "'Twas the night before Christmas" set. It contains a tub of Smitten hand cream, Buffy the Backside Slayer soap, Jingle Balls ballistic, 'Twas the night before Christmas soap, Snow Fairy body gel, Candy Cane bubble bar, Christmas Party bath bomb, Irresistible Bliss shampoo bar, Snowcake soap and Angel's delight soap; P3,495 at Lush.

Dry skin from the weather? Try Decleor's essential balm for the face, as well as its lip balm for extra moisture.









FAIR TRADE FOOT LOTION
SNOW FAIRY

RYAN FERNANDEZ

Fragrances

No self-respecting *kikay* would go out in public without smelling sweet. Here are our top picks for the freshest-smelling fragrances this year:

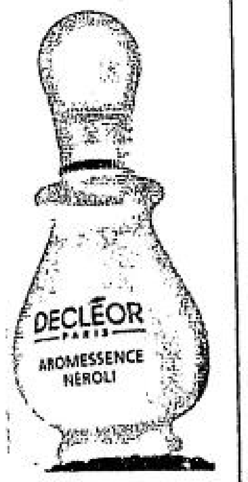
L'Occitane Green Tea with Mint EDT is cool and refreshing, the perfect unisex fragrance, P2,675 at Rustan's Essenses.

Clean Fresh Laundry—one of the top-selling brands of perfume, Clean's latest variant smells like, well, freshly laundered clothes. P3,950 at Rustan's Essenses

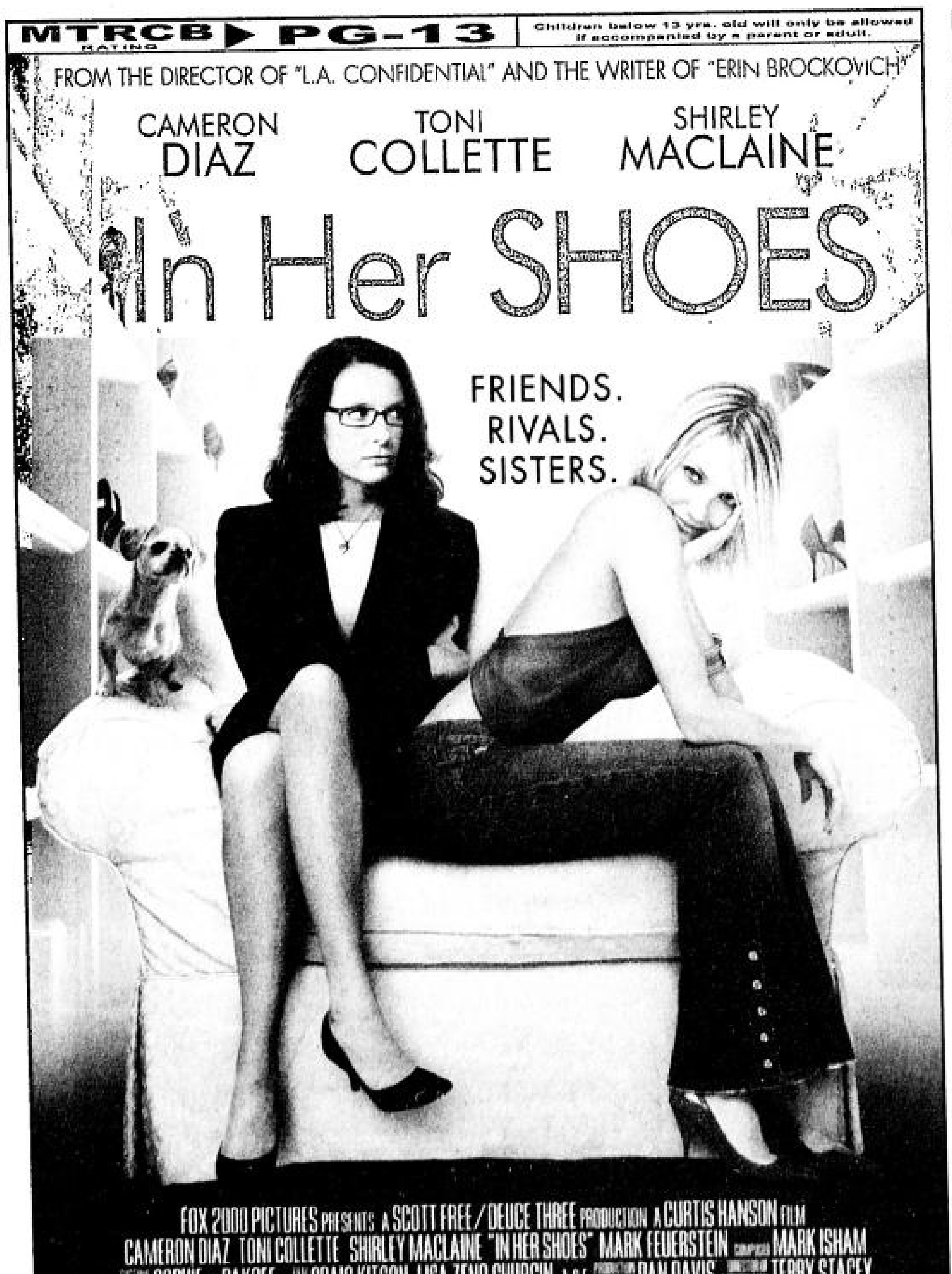
Thierry Mugler Innocent has hints of powder, flowers and fruit, but doesn't smell like grandma's boudoir. Price available upon request at Rustan's.

The Lancôme Miracle gift set, which contains a 50-ml bottle of perfume, body lotion and bath gel, is the perfect gift for the sophisticated woman, P3,395 at Rustan's.

Escada Rockin' Rio, with its fruity tones, conjures images of chilled drinks by the beach. Price available upon request at Rustan's.



RYAN FERNANDEZ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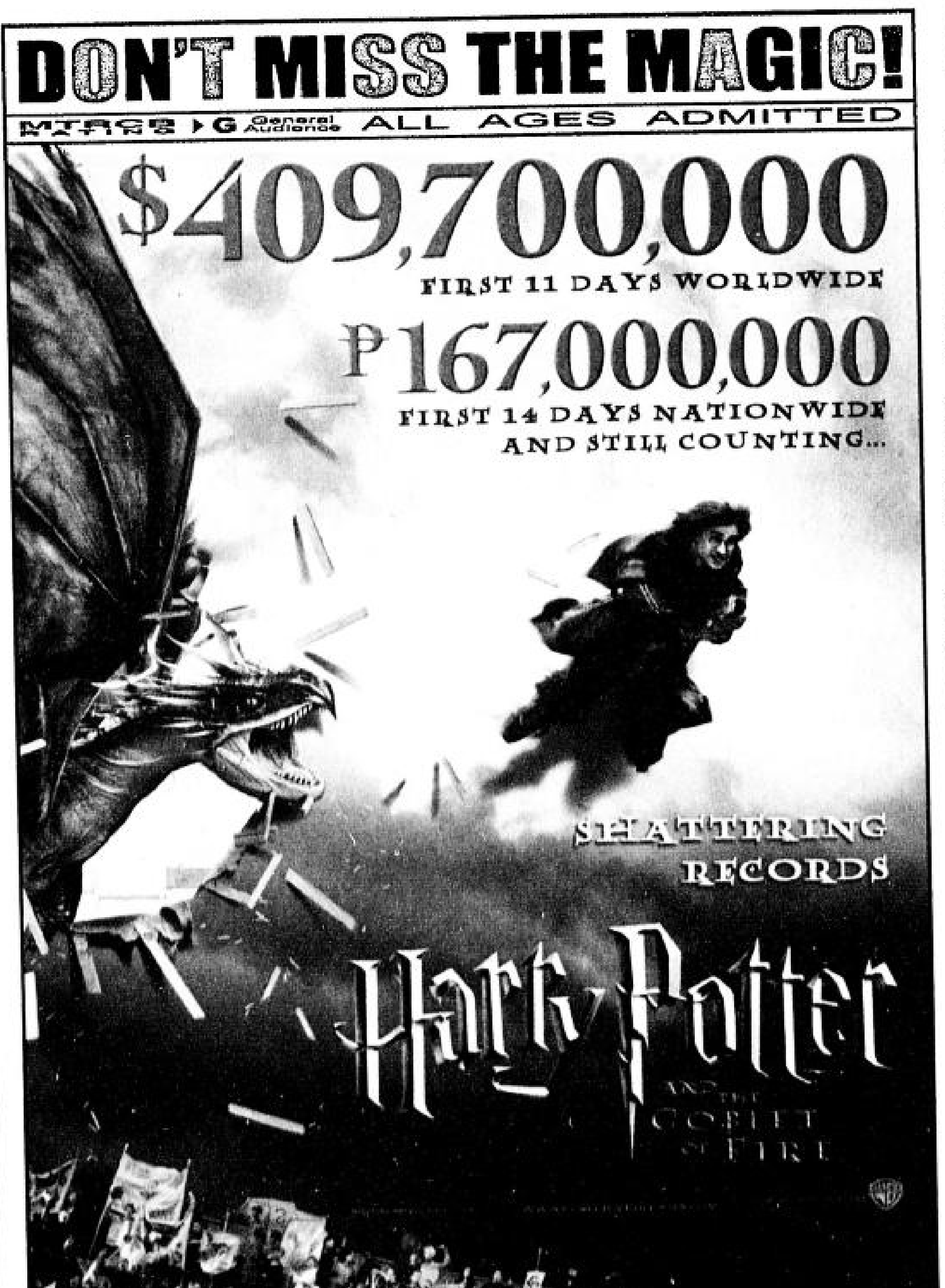
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SHATTERING RECORDS
Harry Potter AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE

Honori
among

PHILIPS, THE TI healthcare and lifest recently conferred th most promising invention a Filipino students at the rece ed National Inventors Week.

Johann Philip Ignacio of M ed School of Technology and ny Caga-anan of UP Los Bañ by Philips for being catalys and national pride in their p ideas and inventions.

Ignacio was awarded in th category for his project on th of Sound Cards as Analog Converters for a PC-based Monitoring and Control Sy Caga-anan was awarded fo on "PC and Micro-Controll mote Controlled Exploring Guided Vehicle" in the colleg

In a speech before the co tors at the DOST-led invento Mateo, president and CE Group of Companies in the told the inventors that the c

THE 2BU! YEA

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WHO WILL BE winners of 2003?

We want you to be th Tell us who you think hailed the Best and Worst the following categories:

Music: band, song, sin tion, radio DJ, music vide

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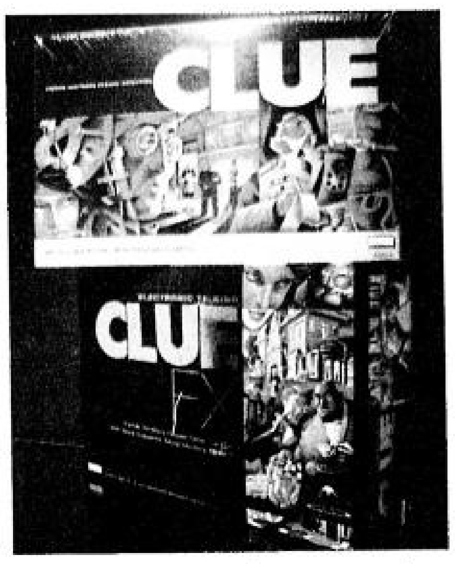
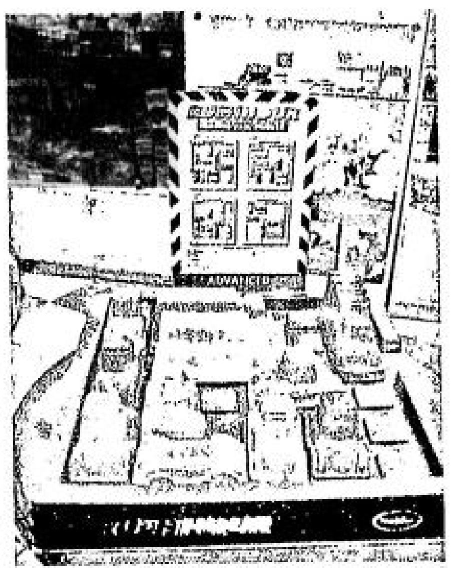


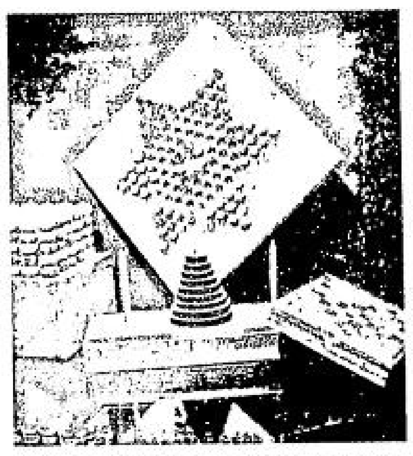
A CHILDHOOD favorite gets an update with the Electronic Talking Clue.



RUSH Hour challenges you to get a red car off the road.

Toys for the big boys—and girls

FUN for the religious. Bible-based games



CHALLENGE your mind with these wooden puzzles.

CALYPSO
DOMINOES
CHESS
Cribbage

GAMES on the go. Perfect for travel, coffee shops and traffic jams

From page E1

Sun, one of the partners.

They also have an ice cream bar/café inside the stores. Their recommendations include cookies, coffee and nostalgic ice cream treats—Daredevil, Choo Choo Train, Ernie and Bert. Their spaghetti is pretty good, too.

Nikki Mendoza, Hobbes' marketing manager, enumerated their top sellers. "For board games, our best sellers are Monopoly, Cranium, Scrabble, SceneIt and Axis and Allies. The Museum Collections and Disney Collection are the popular puzzles. Rush Hour and the wooden puzzles are our best-selling brain benders."

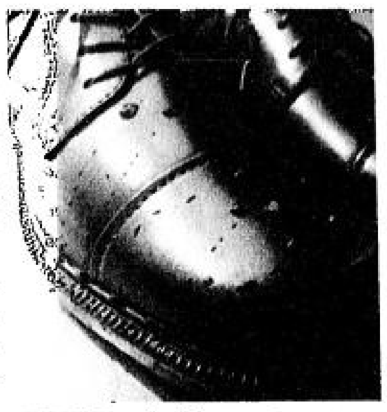
"But it's not really the products, it's what they do," the partners said.

This Christmas, give the gift of good old-fashioned fun.

Visit Hobbes and Landes at Rockwell Power Plant, Greenbelt 3, Promenade in Greenhills, Podium, Shangri-La Edsa Plaza Mall and Alabang Town Center.

Technology as comfort

HUSH PUPPIES RECENTLY unveiled its 2006 Spring-Summer collection, showcasing trend-setting product lines that boast of lightweight, easy-to-wear features and a relaxed, comfortable feel.



HUSH Puppies' Street Smart collection

The Street Smart all-weather leather-shoe collection is a prime example of Hush Puppies' latest comfort technology.

Street Smart incorporates Hush Puppies' best technology—Zero G—which fuses lightweight materials into the construction of the shoe. The result is a flexible, light-as-air product that provides comfort all day long.

The collection also features durable, waterproof construction. To solve the problem of leakages and holes, Hush Puppies uses a non-absorption thread that does not soak up water. The shoes also go through a process called Seam Seal in which they go through a special cement adhesive that waterproofs its joints as it goes through the stitching procedure.

They also go through rigorous waterproofed tests using a Mazer Flex machine.

Hush Puppies is also proud of the Bounce technology. This revolutionary pad fuses dual compounds of rubber and polyurethane that absorbs shock and returns energy.

Their 100 percent Relax collection features the Bounce technology. Made of moisture-absorbing lining, it keeps your feet dry and smell-free. The suede and leather uppers are water-, stain- and scuff-resistant, making them easy to clean and shine.

Visit the Hush Puppies store at 5/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall.

Comics for your Xmas stocking

From page E4

head for the big-screen adaptation, there was one of the earliest Alan Moore works. In a despotic post-nuclear war England, a foppish-looking "terrorist" with a penchant for Shakespeare makes his mark, and brings hope to the oppressed British populace. True, it's not as polished as his later efforts, but unpolished Alan Moore is still head and shoulders above most other comic-book writers. And while David Lloyd is no Gene Ha or Dave Gibbons, he tells a potentially confusing story clearly, and that makes all the difference.

"Hellblazer: Setting Sun"

Published by DC Vertigo

Written by Warren Ellis, illustrated by various artists

No, no, no! For the millionth time, the comic book John Constantine is nothing like his silver screen alter-ego. He may not have Keanu's looks, but the comic-book incarnation of the Hellblazer, is nothing short of the stereotypical "guy we all love to hate, but can't because he's so cool." Warren Ellis' managed to craft some of the creepiest "Hellblazer" stories the book has seen. A definite must-read is his listing of all of Constantine's ex-girlfriends, and the gruesome ends most of them meet. Spine-tingling, and yet, oddly touching at the same time, it even makes more sense than that whacked-out angel-and-devil plot from the movie.

"Batman: Under the Hood"

Published by DC Comics

Written by Judd Winick, illustrated by Doug Mahnke and Tom Nguyen

If you're craving more traditional superheroics, look no further than the icon, Batman. A new vigilante emerges in Gotham City with a more lethal style of dealing with the bad guys, he instantly clashes with the Batman. The thing is, this person who calls himself "The Red Hood" may have ties to the Caped Crusader himself. Is it really a former Robin, long-thought deceased, under that mask? And if it is, what's Batman going to do about it?

"Prelude to Infinite Crisis"

Published by DC Comics

Written and illustrated by various talents

As the DC Universe is confronted once again by a crisis of epic proportions, this compilation of previously published material puts together the puzzle pieces for those not fortunate enough to be able to purchase all the books it puts out each month. How exactly did the friendship of Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman begin to fall apart? What exactly has Lex Luthor been planning? People have died, including former Justice League-member Blue Beetle, but is it just the beginning? The stage is set here for the most important event in DC History since, well, its last crisis in 1986. Anyone with even the most passing interest in all-things DC should get this, and be informed... and prepared.

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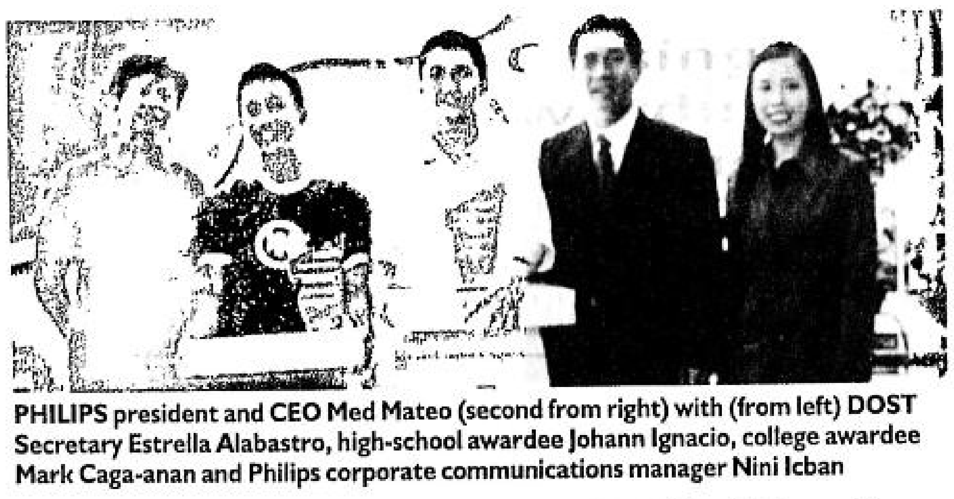


PHILIPS president and CEO Med Mateo (second from right) with (from left) DOST Secretary Estrella Alabastro, high-school awardee Johann Ignacio, college awardee Mark Caga-anan and Philips corporate communications manager Nini Icban

on them in inspiring other Filipinos to do better.

"Innovations that focus on improving the quality of life of our people are so much desired today. The projects of our young inventors are not only breakthroughs in themselves but also a source of pride for all of us. We have every reason to believe that the Filipino inventor is at par with Asia's best," Mateo said.

Philips' support to young Filipino inventors is now on its third year. Its continuous pursuit to develop, manufacture and market technology, healthcare and lifestyle products that improve people's lives is the driving force behind the Philips Most Promising Invention Awards.

RENDER SURVEY

the best and worst of 2005

THE BIG

judge again.
leserve to be
f 2005 under

ger, radio sta-
, concert
iter, actor, actress

Fashion: male model, female model, fashion designer, brand, shop, trend, accessory, fashion icon

Health and beauty: beauty product, spa, salon, hairstyle, fitness regimen

Literature: book, writer, magazine

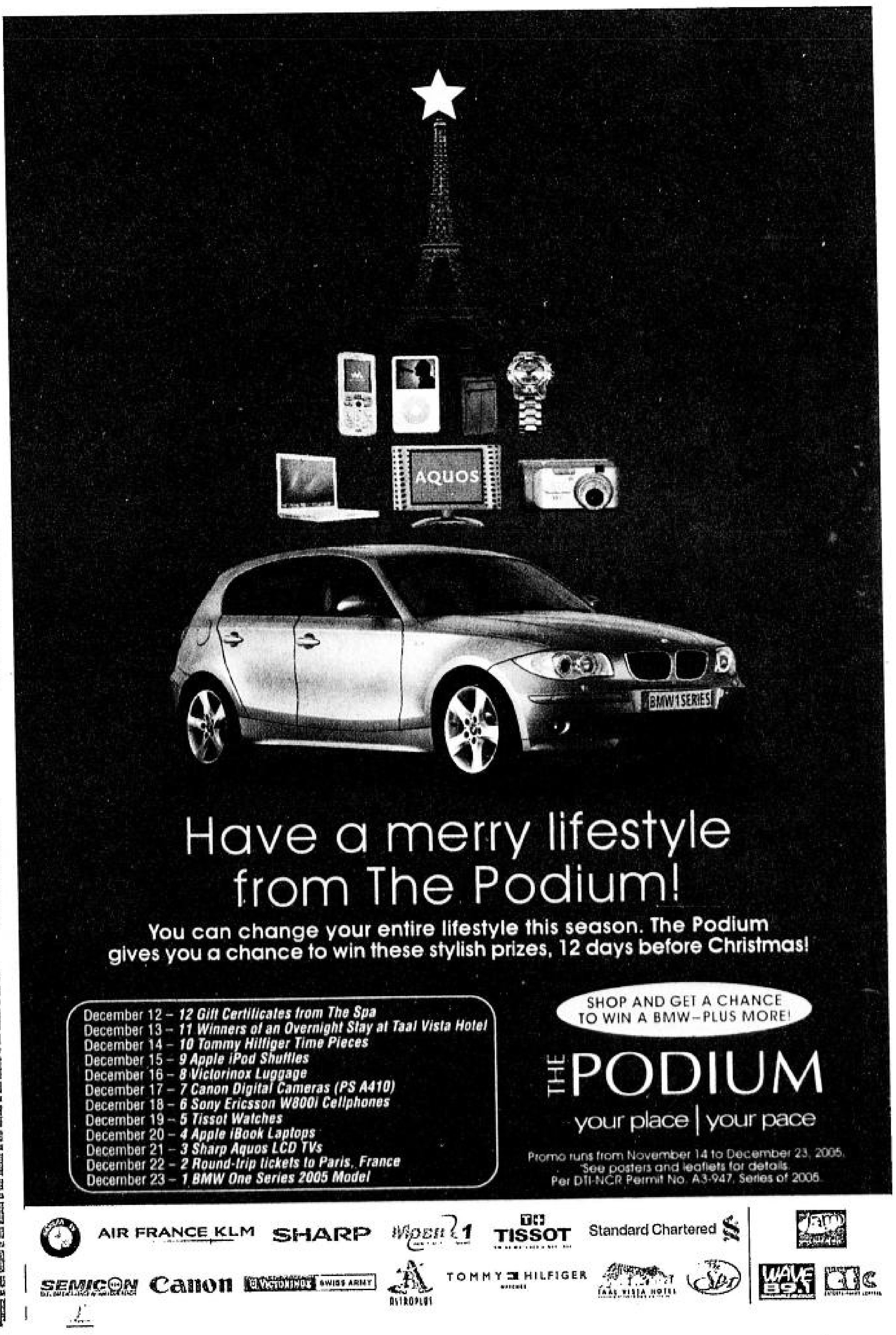
Food: restaurant, dish, fast food

Sports: athlete, UAAP team, NCAA team

Television: commercial, TV show, TV actress, TV actor, VJ, music channel

Technology: website, gadget, game

Send your answers to 2bU! Best and Worst of 2005 Poll, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. corner Yague St., Makati; or e-mail contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph. Please have your answers in by 12 nn on Dec. 25.



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December 14 – 10 Tommy Hilfiger Time Pieces
December 15 – 9 Apple iPod Shuffles
December 16 – 8 Victorinox Luggage
December 17 – 7 Canon Digital Cameras (PS A410)
December 18 – 6 Sony Ericsson W800i Cellphones
December 19 – 5 Tissot Watches
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Comics for your Xmas stocking

By Adrian Dy
2bU! Correspondent

WITH THE GROWING POPULARITY of comic books as materials for Hollywood movies, comics have matured. It used to be that you would have to be either a kid or "immature" to find one of these brightly colored tomes. But times have changed.

"Fray"

Published by Dark Horse Comics

Written by Joss Whedon, illustrated by Karl Moline

In this book, Joss Whedon, who got his small-screen break with "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," takes the Slayer mythos and thrusts it into the future, complete with flying cars and what-not. It's a definite must-have for all die-hard fans of Buffy, and an enjoyable romp for casual readers out there.

"Star Wars Tales" Vol. 3

Published by Dark Horse Comics

Written and illustrated by various writers and artists

This edition of the quarterly "Star Wars" anthology comes highly rated for two reasons. The first is "a day in the life" look at a Storm Trooper, written by none other than the creator of DC Vertigo's "Preacher," Garth Ennis. The other reason? Five words: Darth Vader vs Darth Maul.

"The Walking Dead" Vol.1-4

Published by Image Comics

Written by Robert Kirkman, illustrated by Tony Moore

Think the zombie story is exclusive to crappy B-list movies? "The Walking Dead" would like to change your opinion. This stunning survival epic manages to provide smart social commentary. More important, it's a frightfest that will chill all but the most jaded reader. Gorgeous black-and-white art captures everything in gruesome detail. Definitely disturbing, but well-worth the sleepless nights.

"Young Avengers Vol.1: Sidekicks"

Published by Marvel Comics

Written by Allan Heinberg, illustrated by Jimmy Cheung

Allan Heinberg, one of the writers of TV's "The O.C.," lets his passion for comics shine here, chronicling the formation of the next generation of Marvel's premier superhero team. Former "CrossGen" talent Jimmy Cheung provides lush pencils and captures youth like no other in the biz can. You need not be an "Avengers" fan to appreciate this book, which means lovers of TV teen drama can just jump right in.

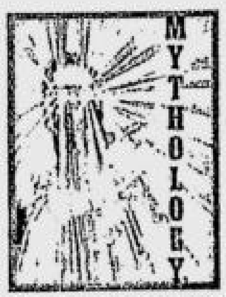
THE NEW AVENGERS

"The New Avengers" Vol.1

Published by Marvel Comics

Written by Brian Michael Bendis, illustrated by David Finch

While the plot—super villains in a jail break —is fairly standard, Bendis successfully nails down the characterization of such a disparate bunch of characters, making The New Avengers seem more "real." The dark, shadow-heavy pencils of David Finch can be annoying sometimes, but it's apt to the mood of the story. The star of the book, though, is not Captain America or Wolverine, but the out-of-his-league Spider-man, who throws pun after pun at the reader. You couldn't ask for a better point-of-view character for this team's first two adventures, collected in this gorgeous hardbound.



"Mythology: The DC Comic Art of Alex Ross"

Published by Pantheon

While not a comic book by any leap of definition, "Mythology" is just so spectacular that I have to include it here. Considered by many to be the best artist in the business, painter Alex Ross takes you through his DC portfolio, from his humble beginnings as a cover artist, to the epic "Kingdom Come" graphic novel, to his awe-inspiring tabloid-size books. To see is, indeed, to believe as each of his figures is this close to photorealistic, which is the highest form of praise I can give to a comic-book artist. Leave this on your coffee table, and you're sure to get all of your guests open-jawed.

"V for Vendetta"

Published by DC Vertigo

Written by Alan Moore, illustrated by David Lloyd

Before Natalie Portman had to shave her

COMICS/ E3

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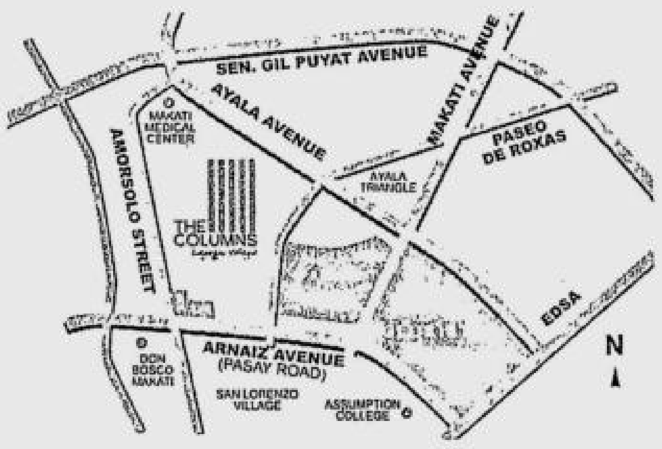
For more information, call 888-0000, email cii-sales@ayalaland.com.ph, or visit www.communityinnovations.com.ph. Model units are available for viewing at the 3rd level, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, everyday from 10 am to 8 pm (Sunday to Thursday), 10 am to 9 pm (Friday and Saturday).

Community Innovations is an Ayala Land company that caters to young urban achievers. It builds balanced, harmonious communities with a sense of fun, where the living experience enhances the lifestyles and fulfills the aspirations of its customers



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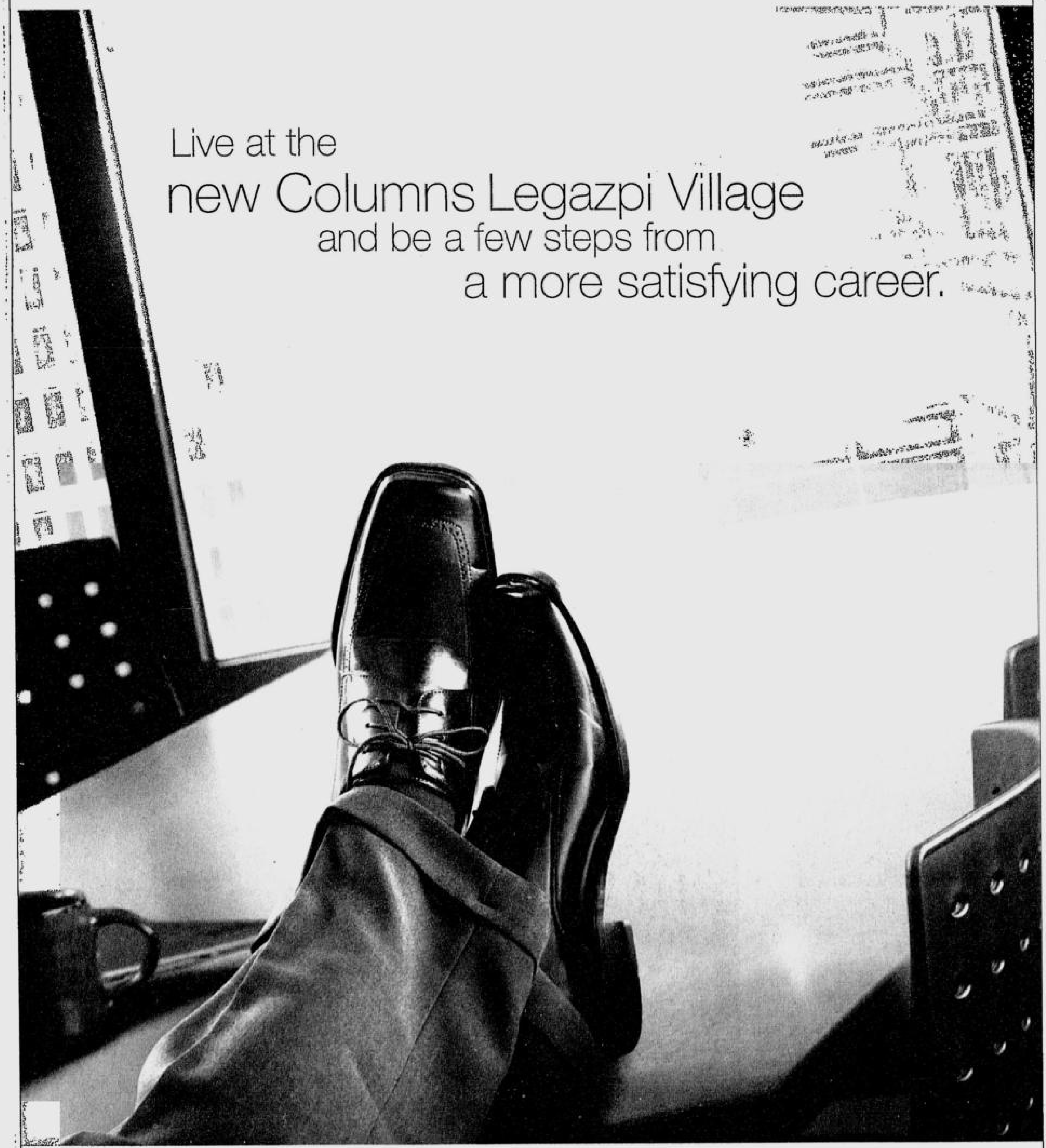

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RIDE AWAY. Tina Tinio, Iyay Coscolluela and birthday girl Kat Holigores

The fruits of achievement are sweeter when you know you've tilled the soil, planted the seed and cultivated it to grow

STILL OUR CHAMP. Toni Leviste at the SEA Games

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

The habits of the Google generation

Yapperazzi

Tim Yap

LAST NIGHT WENT by so quickly. Contrary to **Madonna**'s confessions of "time-goes-by-so-slowly," things have a way of zooming faster than you can finish an episode of "Pinoy Big Brother."

Over Sunday brunch at Embassy Cafeteria, I was chatting with world-class bag designer **Amina Aranaz** and her fiancé **Rafa Alunan**. We were discussing the habits of her 18-year-old sister and their friends.

"They're so into 'The O.C.' that during her debut, they had the party in a yacht, and the girls were wearing black-and-white cocktail dresses while the guys were in tuxedo jackets with graphic tees and sneakers. The guys were very stylish, and it was all so normal for them," Amina, whose bags are true-blue Pinoy statements in global style, recalled with fascination.

"They're much more aware of trends, are very fashion-forward and open to new experiences," another brunch mate quipped. Amina noted that when her sister and her posse go out, they give

THE HABITS/ F2

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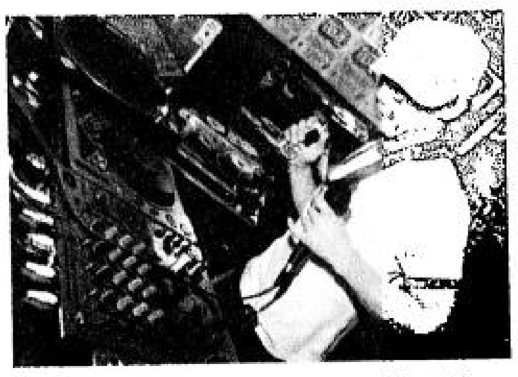
YOU DA DJ! DJ contestant struts his stuff at Café Maestro.

YAPARAZZI with music mates Bianca Gonzales and Pamela Picazo

MARI *MO 'TO*. Alvin Campana with Motorola main man Mari Litonjua

BUBBLY BABES. Mariel Quiros and Champagne Morales

ARE YOU READY *NA*? Ana Seipelt is up for the DJ challenge.

The habits of the Google generation

From page F1

out attire themes to each other—"geek chic," "La Boheme" or whatever fashion concoction satisfies their whim.

The thrill of the instant

In an era where everything can be accomplished in a snap, the thrill of the instant has never been this in-demand. From reality shows that produce overnight stars to 1-2-3 snap! fashion-to-function objects of affection, being young and restless has never had these many perks. *Galeng*!

But are all these extra privileges really a cause for celebration?

Whereas the past generations were afraid of gadgets, the new and improved "download-and-enter" mentality of the Google generation embraces these new tools to further enhance their entertainment. So much for flunking my typewriting class. Or researching with my trusty Collier's Encyclopedia—all volumes!

From old school to *nu skul*, the party scene's past seasons had the DJ reigning supreme. Now the power has shifted to YOU (yes, you with the iTunes-capable Motorola I-ROKR phone)! Yup, now you can play anything and blast it out loud to your heart's and ear's content.

You da rocker!

That's exactly what I witnessed at Café Maestro (Nicanor Garcia Street, Makati) last Friday when Motorola made five electro-crazy music meisters clash and flash their type of tunes into the red-bricked room of the hot night spot.

TURN *KO TO'*. DJs all—Wally Contento, Katsi Lee and Alvin Campana take a bow.

It is always fun and exciting to discover venues outside your normal nocturnal route and check out new DJs spinning fresh and edgy stuff. Or in this case, old ditties sounding new when played to a younger audience.

That night, I heard "Too Young" by Phoenix, "Outlaw" by Olive, "Karma Karma Chameleon" by Boy George, even "Tainted Love" by Soft Cell sounding so new! As with anything and everything this side of pop culture, it goes by cycles, really.

You then realize Manila (or wherever you're at, from Aparri to Jolo) isn't as small as you thought it was. The choices are limitless, if you know where to look. Did you know that Absinth is now open on Sundays as well? From 6 p.m. onwards, you can bring your own CDs and they'll play them for you. Who says you can't be the boss?

MOTO HOSTS. Wendell and Isa Garcia encourage you to take the I-ROKR bang.

And if you're dateless, there is nothing like meeting new people outside your loop. They do not know your reputation (yet), so it's always good to start with a blank slate.

If life were a reality show

With all this access, it's the easiest thing to go ballistic and just drown in indulgence. However, we should be careful in using all this information and freedom—not to seek instant thrills but to scope out stuff that would make us better, stronger and wiser.

Even the "Big Brother" peeps will realize later on that their fame is about as good as the next reality show season. You can have instant fame via a reality show, but will it really last?

If our medal tally in the recent SEA Games (I went to witness the equestrian division, rooting for my champion **Toni Leviste** at the Alabang Country Club last Sunday) was to be of any basis, the athletes really worked to get to where they are—medal or no medal, they deserve the glory.

Despite the speed by which we are able to acquire certain desires, we should realize the value of going deeper than the surface—to work harder, to own it, to instill a sense of *tiyaga* in our lives. Now that's really *galeng*!

Nothing of real value in this world can be obtained instantly. To attain a certain connoisseurship, we have to go through various tasks, challenges and obstacles. The secret is to relish it.

The fruits of achievement are sweeter when you know you've tilled the soil, planted the seed and cultivated it to grow.

Now, if you let the 47-year-old *lola* finish her confession on the dance floor, you'll actually hear "Time goes by, so slowly" wrap up with the words, "for those who wait, no need to hesitate."

F CHICK. Fisca Menken electro-partying.

LOUNGERI luxing with Celine Lopez

OH MOTO! Rock it with Denise Haak.

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Flashes of light

Indulge your and your loved ones' inner shutterbugs this Christmas

By Tammy David
2bU! Correspondent

MUST-HAVE bag from Lowepro (lowepro.com), available at InfoMax Enterprise

PHOTOGRAPHY, BE IT film or digital, is generally an expensive hobby. The price of entry-level Digital SLRs alone would make you buy an iPod in a heartbeat.

But there are still ways to give your shutterbug loved ones a very merry Christmas—heartfelt ways such as accompanying them to that mandatory trip to Quiapo, or lovingly compiling all their works in one big scrapbook.

Here are some gift ideas for those who can't get enough of firing away at sunsets, portraits or what have. Visit the tech havens or quirky hobby shops that carry these goodies.

DEFINITELY in the (Christmas) bag, baby! Tamrac 5606 P3,250, available at JT Photo World

JT Photo World

1082 Chino Roces Ave., Barangay Tejeros, Makati, tel. 8995018 www.jtphotoworld.com; linquiry@jtphotoworld.com

1. **Tamrac 5606**

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2. **Velbon Carbon Fiber 630**

Light, durable, perfect for trips to catch that decisive moment, minus the fuzz (P13,700).

3. **Sigma 18-200/3.5-6.3 DC**

Its lens design incorporates aspherical lenses and SLD (Special Low Dispersion) glass. The superzoom lens is housed in a compact and lightweight gadget 70mm (2.8") in diameter, 75.6mm (3") in length and weighing just 385g/13.5oz (Nikon Mount). P19,900

4. **Sigma 10-20/4-5.6 EX DC HSM**

Ultra-wide zoom lens for digital SLR camera use only and equipped with HSM (P28,500).

POINT, shoot, store, view. Epson P-2000 Multimedia Storage Viewer, P31,995, available at Avant Abenson

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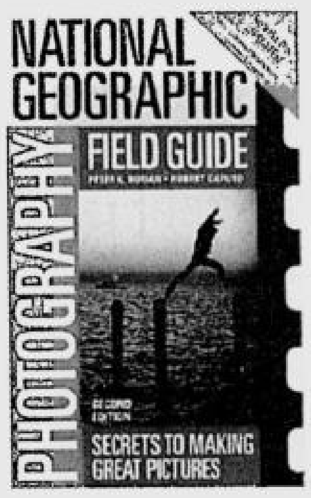
1. **"Photo Icons: The Story Behind the Pictures,"** Volume 1, 1827-1926, (Taschen), by Hans-Michael Koetzle, P629
2. **"Photography Exposed: The Story Behind the Image"** (Life), P1,205
3. **"The Book of Photography: The History, the Technique, the Art, the Future"** (National Geographic) text by Anne H. Hoy, P1,929
4. **"The Photographer's Guide to Light"** by Nigel Hicks, P1,405
5. **"National Geographic Field Guide,"** P1,059
6. **"A-Z Creative Photography"** by Lee Frost, P925
7. **"Q&A Guide to Photo Techniques"** by Lee Frost, P1,375
8. Perpetual Travel: Undated Calendar **"365 Days of Living the Dream,"** P879



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Popular Photography magazine
12 issues for P3,465
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3. **ZEN Microphoto 8GB**, P15,999
4. **Epson P-2000 Multimedia Storage Viewer 40GB**, P31,995
5. **Mac Mini**, P40,999
6. **Canon Selphy 600 Photo Printer**, P15, 995
7. **Canon Selphy 400 Photo Printer**, P7,995
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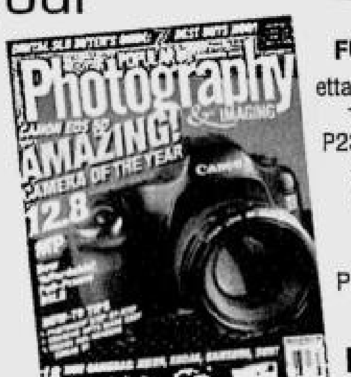

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3. **Lowepro Computrekker AW Camera/Notebook backpack.** Fits 1-2 SLRs and 4-6 lenses or compact medium format system and large notebook/computer, P10,500
4. **Lowepro Orion Trekker II digital camera backpack**, P4,200
5. **Lowepro Nova Photo/Video bag**—Nova 3 AW, P3,400
6. **Giottos Cleaning Kits CL 1001**—includes Multi Optical Cleaning Solution, Rocket-air, Micro-fibre magic cloth, Retractable brush, cotton swabs with paper shaft, P1,500
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Cheryll Basquial	Baguio
Cirilo L. Santos	Makati
Jennifer R. Agawan	Quezon City
Jennylyn R. Bautista	Laguna
Rosalie Bañ'1ares	Rizal
Simon Dy Tian	Binondo, Manila
Ted Laurence L. Tuason	Laguna

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Analin G. Antonio	Nueva Ecija
Andrea Paloso	Pasig
Anna Chavez	Mandaluyong
Antonio A Rivera,III	Makati
Antonio Saldua Jr.	Makati
Avelina Lampis	Bacolod
Bernabe S. Roque	Bulacan
Beth Fabro	Paranaque
Betha Kris Fonatnilla	Dagupan
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Dennis Segocio	Caloocan
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Edwin Del Rosario	Pasig
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Esperanza Ong	Malabon
Esteban Chua	Las Pinas
Evagine Buyan	Cavite
Fe Carbonell	Paranaque
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Graycienel Bantugan	Cavite
Gwen Patanao	Laguna
Hannah Grace Navarro	Rizal
Ian Earth S. Lamzon	Cebu
Ian Villanueva	Rizal
Imelda J. Basco	Rizal
Jackie Lou J. Velasco	Bacolod
Jason Vallesteros	Muntinlupa
Jeffrey Mortera	Makati
Jennifer S. Borja	Cagayan De Oro
Jennilyn Nucup	Pampanga
Jessica Pangan	Pampanga
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Johmel Reyes	Sta. Mesa
Jorge Fajardo	Sorsogon
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Lito Carpio	Rizal
Ressie Bagonoc	Cotabato
Ronie B. Literato	Sungao
Roserel L. Virtudazo	Taguig
Zenaida Flor Icban	Quezon City

Odyssey CD

Name:	Address:
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Alejandro Depano	Paranaque
Alfonso Mejia	Laguna
Alma Veraguas	Pampanga
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Winners will be notified via text message.

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We have a winner!

YOUR ENTRIES catch our attention for different reasons.

Last week, Miguel Anton Garcia won the iPod Nano he was dreaming about, thanks to his killer vocals. This week, 23-year-old Judie Rose Pimentel Tugado, a law student from Calamba City, will receive the Motorola Rokr because we loved her ultra-creative Christmas tree.

You, too, can be a winner! Win this phone!

This week, 2bU! and Digital Exchange are giving away a Motorola E680i and a Motorola HT820 Bluetooth Stereo headset. If you want to join our contest, tell us why you deserve to win this phone and the headset in the most creative way you can. E-mail your entries to contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph. Don't forget your name, school/office and contact info!

MOTOROLA E680I

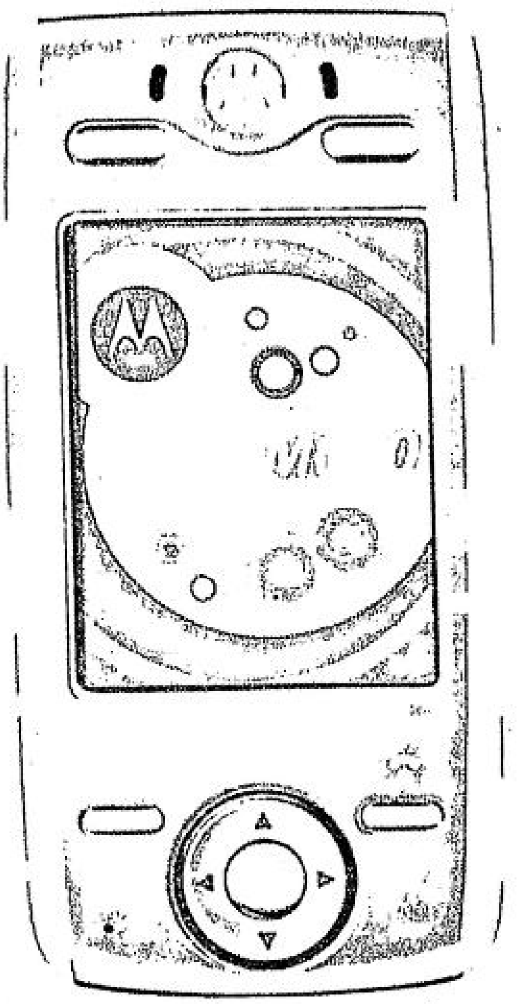
Frosty cool

This phone is Motorola's first attempt at a Linux-powered phone with a Java GUI. That means open system, dude!

By Gabriel H. Mercado
Contributor

FIRST THINGS FIRST. IF you're not living under a rock, then texting is important to you. Therefore it stands to reason that if anything hampers this essential activity, it will not be appreciated.

What then to make of something called "pen stylus character input" to send messages, a decidedly two-handed affair that necessitates the need for a pen-like object, after which you either rely on the device's handwriting recognition or tap onto the screen keyboard the letters of your message one by one, until finally it is sent on its way?



MOTOROLA E680i

Also, what to make of the fact that this input method seems to be prevalent in only the higher-end models of brand-name phones, while the rest of us who can only afford those in the far end of brochures (indicating affordable prices), are left with the traditional SMS key input?

Enter the Motorola E680i, a prime example of the high-end pen stylus input model. Its arrival is an opportunity to answer these nagging questions.

Faced with a busy week at work, inclusive of a visit to a friend during the long weekend and an untimely bout with fever and amoebiasis, I held on to my E680i, using to the hilt its built-in FM Radio, mp3 music player, mpeg4 video player, Java games, inclusive 128mb TransFlash memory to store readables in pdf or txt format, PDA functionalities and the somewhat dated VGA camera.

Linux interface

The first thing noticeable in this PDA-sized device is the 240x320 screen and the stark interface with a lack of varied buttons that might disappoint the button devotee. But boot it up and you're greeted with lots of nice flashy Motorola images zigzagging across the screen, a telltale signal of things to come.

But just let me be a geek for one paragraph, and say that the interface quickly reminded me of Linux interface KDE. Turns out this is Motorola's first attempt at a Linux-powered phone with a Java GUI.

So while it may lack the rounded edges and color-coordinated gradients of a Windows or Palm mobile device, this is Linux, and Linux means tweakability to levels unforeseen in the personal computer world, making one hope it would extend to this device as well.

While a casual Google search proved inconclusive on this, I wager that some partisan soul is at this moment bent on running something interesting about it. Should it catch on, then Motorola's choice for operating system will make sense in the long run. Kudos to them!

Groovy

The technical side now over, let's get to what's really important: Will the Motorola E680i impress your friends?

Well, here are a couple of things to note. First, the E680i can mate with the Motorola HT820 Bluetooth Stereo headset, a device so groovy that if you wear one with a discharged battery at a street corner, pretty women will be giving you their phone numbers.

And while I tried just that, although alone and at the back of a bus (it was safer), I still felt very, very cool. Seriously, a wireless bluetooth headset is so audaciously frosty, especially one as sleekly designed as this, that you probably shouldn't turn it on so as to savor the public's gasps of envy when they see it. And oh, it sounds great, too.

Second, the E680i is available for free via Globe Platinum's Plan 5000, which, among other things, offers its clients priority queuing and superior customer service. At its first and only lounge at the Digital Exchange in Glorietta 3, Globe has dedicated lounge areas, free use of three meeting rooms, and free broadband-powered Internet access upon reservation.

And so, while I've yet to conclude that the pen stylus input system deserves a place in the world of the busy texter, I will certainly miss the do-it-all, brightly lit, pioneering open-source Motorola E680i and its handsome assistant, the HT820 Bluetooth Headphone, when I give them back.

Whoever wins this phone in the promo (check out 2bU!'s announcement) will definitely look cool.

MOTOROLA HT820 Bluetooth Stereo headset

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Hong Kong Disneyland with Visa.

Visa Hong Kong Disneyland Getaway

Have a magical vacation in Hong Kong Disneyland the Visa way -- get a chance to win a round trip for a family of 4 to Hong Kong Disneyland. Plus enjoy breakfast with your favorite Disney characters, and receive 2 FASTPASS tickets per guest (8 for a family of 4) for line reservations in selected rides and shows.

Be mesmerized and dazzled with the 4 magical worlds of Hong Kong Disneyland. Experience what it was like in the turn of the 20th Century in **Main Street, USA**. Be intrigued at the mysterious jungle of **Adventureland**. Meet Mickey and all his friends in **Fantasyland** and blast into outer space at futuristic **Tomorrowland**! Timeless tales and bold adventures are brought magically to life for children of all ages.

Mechanics:

1. Promo Period: 27 November 2005 to 24 January 2006.
2. Minimum of P500 single-receipt Visa purchase will allow Visa cardholder to register his/her Visa transaction for a chance to win one (1) of seven (7) Family of Four packages to Hong Kong Disneyland on March 2-4, 2006. PLUS HK$5,000 pocket money*

How to join?

Register your Visa transactions at any of the following available channels:

1.

SMS: Text Visa for details. P2.50 per text will be charged.	Globe - 2361 Smart - 325 Visa <name as it appears on card,address,issuing bank,last 4 digit,amount of transaction,date of transaction,time of transaction> and send to the corresponding access number of your mobile network. (Note that there are no spaces after each comma. Please do not use commas for amounts more than P999.99, and when entering the address.) Ex. Visa MENNIE SO,24/F 6750 AYALA AVENUE MAKATI CITY,AIG,1234,1000.25,112705,1808

2. Call Center: Metro Manila - 637 2768, Provincial - Toll Free # 1800-1888-2591
3. Website: www.hblmasla.com/visa

DISNEY VISA

*Per family of four
See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No 3082 Series of 2005